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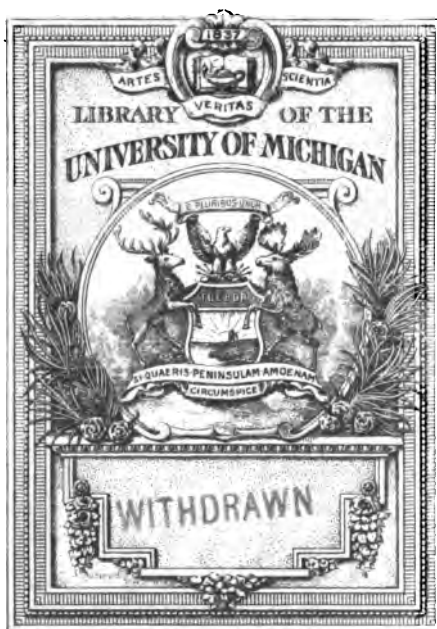
FROM BLAKE

TO ARNOLD

SELECTIONS FROM ENGLISH POETRY
(1783 - 1853)

BRENNAN PICKBURN & BRERETON





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FROM BLAKE TO ARNOLD :
SELECTIONS FROM ENGLISH POETRY



FROM
BLAKE TO ARNOLD

SELECTIONS FROM
ENGLISH POETRY

(1783-1853)

WITH INTRODUCTION, CRITICAL ESSAYS, AND NOTES

By C. J. BRENNAN, M.A.

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PREFACE.

8-13-45 *Don't*

A SELECTION like this is naturally based on accepted anthologies. The editor has especially referred to Mr. Henley's all-inclusive book of *English Lyrics* and Mrs. Meynell's more fastidious choice, *The Flower of the Mind*, the notes to which he has found most stimulating. Only one piece, the first chosen from Keats, has been included on other grounds than those of recognized poetic worth. It appeared important, as an illustration both of one element in Keats' poetic genius and of certain aspects of essential poetic theory, which the editor seemed to find more clearly exemplified in Keats than elsewhere in English verse.

That theory, in so far as he seems to himself to comprehend it, the editor has endeavoured to formulate in the first introduction, both because he considered this little book as likely to be, for some students, an introduction to poetry, and in need, therefore, of some expositions of the aims and means of that art, and because he himself derived no little benefit from the necessity of expressing, in connected sequence, thoughts which have been for some time habitual with him. He

need hardly say that he counts on the generous co-operation of teachers in elucidating these considerations to the student.

Books to which he feels bound to express especial indebtedness are: Messrs. Ellis & Yeats' edition of Blake, Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, and Mr. Laurence Housman's *Writings of William Blake*; Matthew Arnold's *Poems of Wordsworth*; Mr. Colvin's *Selections from Landor* and his *Keats*; Patmore's *Principle in Art*; the French translations of Poe by Baudelaire & Mallarmé; Professor Saintsbury's *Matthew Arnold*; and in merely philological matters, the Oxford and Century Dictionaries, and the concordances to Shakespeare of Mr. Bartlett, and to Milton of Bradshaw. The bulk of the linguistic notes is due to Messrs. Pickburn & Brereton; and Mr. Brereton has been especially helpful in comparing the text with that of the authentic editions.

SYDNEY, *September 25th, 1899.*

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INTRODUCTION.

I. THEORETICAL.

IF the British race had never gained glory by any other feat, its name would still have gone down to the ages yet to come as that of the nation possessing the greatest body of high poetry, after the Greeks; and when I say *after* the Greeks, I would limit the preposition to its time-meaning, since it would be difficult to say which of the two literatures, Greek and English, is superior to the other in poetic value. And this is remarkable in the case of English poetic genius, that, even after the unique phenomenon of Shakespeare and the luxuriant Elizabethan period, after the solemn splendour of Milton—and these would have sufficed for the glory of a literature—these latter times were to exhibit a continuous blossoming of the imagination, in at least half-a-dozen poets of the first rank and how many others of high value.

It is to the men who revived poetry at the beginning of our century that this book would introduce you: before passing to chosen specimens of their work, I would present to you, first, a few reflections on the

nature of the poetic art; secondly, certain remarks on their relation to their direct predecessors in literature.

It is not here my intention to offer you any final all-embracing theory of poetry: apart from the inopportunity of such argument in a work of this kind, there is enough difficulty in the task to terrify him who would attempt it, and many a strong spirit has failed therein. Seeing that most often the philosopher or artist who has set out to expound the nature of art, and especially of poetry, has been happiest in isolated remarks, I would limit my ambition to the statement of a few general considerations on the most important points of our subject, considerations which are not necessarily novel, yet have been thought out consistently by the author of their present statement. To some amount of coherence they do therefore pretend; they must, however, be regarded as being merely the enveloping lines, as it were, of a figure not strictly defined.

The definitions of poetry are already many. From the artist's special point of view, that of Edgar Poe, *The rhythmical creation of Beauty*, is the most alluring. Of late definitions the most popular seems to be that which would reduce poetry, with all art, to the mere expression of emotion; poetry being distinguished from other art merely by its medium of speech, and from the ordinary expression of emotion in language by the rhythmical quality of its utterance. The statement of this theory is its sufficient refutation; to consider it more closely, however, will carry us over a part of our consideration of poetry.

The direct motive in poetry, as in all art, is emotion. It may be emotion arising from any occurrence in human

life, whether that occurrence belong to external existence, as the encounter with a person who becomes dear to the poet, or to the intimate life, as the devotion to an idea. The emotion, as expressed in poetry, must explain its accompanying or generating conditions, as a love-poem must contain some reference to the beloved: thus, then, in the higher poetry, other spiritual elements besides emotion are not excluded—the poet's ideas and conception of the universe, for instance—since ideas are interesting, perhaps, only as parts of man's passional life, as beliefs. But emotion must exist and be expressed, otherwise there is no poetry. Such is the necessary place of emotion in poetry, that of the motive, of the directing power. But the definition we are to consider would make it the sole subject-matter, its mere expression the whole art. Against which there are two fatal objections: the first, that out of the mere fact of emotion, general and unqualified, one can draw no necessary reason for the use of rhythmical language; seeing that, if our sole business be to express emotion, we can do so in all cases without employing rhythm, in many without employing articulate language at all, pain, for instance, being fully expressed in a cry; that it then becomes necessary to qualify the emotion as "poetical," thus returning to the original state of the question: the second, that we can cite many passages wherein emotion is uttered in rhythmical language, and wherein there is yet no poetry: it is then insufficient to call this art the expression of human emotion in rhythmical language. Thus, many a poet, under stress of emotion, in itself most noble, has produced verse rhythmical and technically faultless, in which yet there is no satisfaction

for the poetic spirit. Thus, Wordsworth (whom I choose because none has more sinned in this respect than he):

O for the coming of that glorious time
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
And best protection, this Imperial Realm,
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
An obligation, on her part, to *teach*
Them who are born to serve her and obey.

(Quoted by Matthew Arnold, Preface to
Poems of Wordsworth, p. xx.)

We recognize that the poet was here inspired by most generous emotion and that he has undoubtedly expressed it: yet we cannot but confess that his words are merely so much prose, that there is no evident reason why he should have chosen the rhythmical language of verse.

The definition of Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton is at least fuller: *Poetry is the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language.* The word *concrete* here is the word which the other definition lacked. But even it is vague, as indeed the whole definition is. We find here various qualities of Poetry—the essential ones, it is true—but merely juxtaposed: the definition in no way makes clear how or why they demand each other's presence. But this perhaps is what no definition can do. It will be more useful for us to follow the course we have already begun. We found that the definition which we first took into consideration failed in that it did not qualify the word *emotion*. Let us ask: What is required to fit emotion for poetic expression? What, for instance, was it that Wordsworth lacked when writing the passage quoted? What is it that is necessary to convert

an impulse, already admirable in itself, into true poetical inspiration? The answer is, Imagination. A transformation of force is necessary, in the spiritual world, before an enthusiasm, moral or sensuous, can produce poetry; just as, in the material world, transformation of force must take place before heat can result from motion. Moral enthusiasm, love, anger, all belong to one kind of emotion, the extra-poetical: recast and altered by the imagination, they become poetry.

Let us then say that poetry is the expression of imagination in language, acknowledging that this is not a definition, but a text for explanation.

In the first place, seeing that the word imagination is used to denote the invention of things not existing in experience, and the creation of characters—which is part of the novelist's task—we do not advance much by its bare use. Let us, however, distinguish between imagination, pure and simple, and the invention of incident, either in verse or prose, Invention properly so called, and the creation of character, a dramatic gift and quite unessential to poetry.

Considering now imagination, we shall find its simplest function, technically envisaged, to consist in the putting of thought and emotion into concrete *images*,¹

¹ The definition is empirical. Imagination has nothing to do with the fictions idea, emotion, sensation: it deals directly with the living spiritual unity or "mood" (p. xxii.), to which it gives the only possible expression. When you can extract from the expressed poem any residue of "idea" or the like, you may be sure either that you have not properly read the poem (which is most probable), or that the poem contains unpoetic elements. Of course you will find such residue carefully extracted for you in the notes to this book: but here all is empirical.

which images must be images of beauty, giving pleasure to a certain sense, the sense of beauty. There is no possible definition of beauty in terms of anything other than itself: one can only ask, Does this or this affect me in a certain way? Just so there is no other definition of light than that which enables the eye to see, and the seeing eye is final arbiter. We shall, at least, find out a little more concerning the nature of Beauty in the course of our inquiry.

Imagination is best explained by citing instances. Take Wordsworth when his moral enthusiasm has become poetical:

Stern Lawgiver ! yet dost thou wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face :
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are
fresh and strong. (*Ode to Duty.*)

This is quite different from the prosiness of the passage above quoted. The idea of Duty is not here an abstract conception, it has found vivid expression in concrete imagery. Flowers laughing in their beds are a beautiful living symbol of the joy which the poet conceives as attending on obedience to law; the ordered courses of the stars are no longer an object of dull measurement, but part of a living whole informed with an idea. Thought, emotion, and sense are here inseparably united, and their union is beauty.

It must not be thought that, because the poet should

deal with concretes instead of with abstracts, the mere ingenious handling of detail, however beautiful it may be in itself, is imagination.¹ Imagination deals with beauty as significance, the union of sense and spirit. It is a lower faculty, Fancy, which manipulates beautiful detail in an ingenious and charming fashion. (I need not allude to mere description, which is not literature at all, but journalism.) Thus, in a song of Shakespeare's, the opening lines

Full fathom five thy father lies :
Of his bones is coral made ;
Those are pearls that were his eyes :

are merely fanciful ; whereas the following :

Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange ;

just because they are more abstract and more mysterious than the others, while yet keeping close to the concrete fact, are purely imaginative. They express the inner idea of all the beautiful fact explained in the first three lines.

Returning now to the statement that imagination is a unity of the spirit in beauty, I would from that point lead the student to a nearer apprehension of its nature, by way of a discussion of certain aspects of poetic form. The student will observe that a large part of the texture of every poem consists of what are technically termed similes and metaphors—comparisons, that is, between

¹ Mr. Watts-Dunton insists so strongly on the concreteness of poetry that he makes the highest, or "absolute," poetic vision to consist in seeing the details of another person's soul.

spiritual and material fact. Thus the passage of Wordsworth above quoted assumes many such comparisons, a general belief in kinship between the voice of conscience and natural law. Compare the little *Song* by Shelley, *Music when soft voices die* ; or Wordsworth's lines on the "immortal sea" in his *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. All poetry is built up on such simple comparisons, however much the comparison may be subtilized in expression. Each true poem gathers the images which are akin to the emotion prompting it. But this implies, does it not, the belief in a universal kinship of all beauty, of all beautiful natural and material objects with the pure impulses of the spirit? It is impossible for the poet to celebrate any one thing singly, without reference to its kin. Poetry is the evidence of the adequacy of the human soul to all that is beautiful: in it there is an exchange between the two, the soul receiving a body of beauty, and conferring on the material world true significance.

This I hold to be the fundamental imaginative act, and I perceive implied in it the creation of a perfect life. Were the spirit in each of us thoroughly adequate to all beauty, the strife between soul and sense, between man and nature, would be abolished—the paradisaal state would be now a reality. The tendency of all true poetry is to free from the manifold small disturbances of life the large, rhythmical states or "moods" of the soul—the abiding figures whose union is the type, the ideal or perfect human figure, which it is not given to any one man to be: poetry is inspired by what Shelley calls the "life of life." Since we do not live such a life we create it in art, and poetry becomes our "complementary

life." It can now be understood why beauty is the object of poetry, since such perfect life is not a thing to be proven by argument, nor to be inculcated by moral precept, but to be felt spiritually as a divine pleasure. Perfection is always Beauty. Further, to recur to a technical question, we perceive the necessity of the rhythmical form of verse, since what is really expressed in poetry, the kinship of all beauty, is a system of all harmonies and rhythms, the relations between all elements of beauty. And the directing emotion of a poem, in obedience to which these elements unite, is always expressed more by the music of the verse than by the logic of the words.

An instinctive feeling of this mysterious correspondence of things guided those anonymous poets, the creators of the ancient myths. Their personages, fragmentary expressions of the perfect human type implied in all poetic creation, are always human interpretations of natural fact, embodiments in outer beauty of human life, of those ideal "moods" which alone are vast, clear, and simple enough to be adequate to natural aspects. Not merely because the sun sets, but because the splendours of the sunset evoke vast feelings of dying magnificence, fading glory, and passion come to its term, did the setting sun become the hero going to his great doom after a life of kindly might. Not merely because the dawn fades in the brilliancy of morn, but because the dawn-light suggests shy tenderness, did the dawn become the trusting maiden abandoned by the hero called to glorious life. The student may consult the introduction and notes to the poems selected from Keats to see how a great poet may reinforce his own natural

gift by feeling back along the myths towards that instinctive insight into the idea which man and nature go to make up. And our belief in this fundamental poetic reality, this intimate and complete cohesion of all that is beautiful, is strengthened when we see how the old simple myths have, under the treatment of great poets, been found yet capable of expressing the deepest and highest thought and emotion to which humanity has in later times arrived. Witness the old fairy-tale of Eros and Psyche, of the princess wedded to a spouse whose form she does not know, whether divine or monstrous, whom to look upon is to lose, found adequate, while yet remaining unchanged and ever fresh, to adumbrate all the secret experiences of the soul in the mysteries of love, human or divine.

Another aspect of imagination then is that, by its union and intension of all mental forces, by its pre-occupation with the great "moods," it returns to, or tends towards, the well-springs and sources of life, where all life is lovely and free from strife or discord, which is ugliness. But just because no man may be complete or perfect, and since none therefore may become in life or poetry a final symbol of ideal humanity, we must seek the expression of that life, not in any one poem nor in any one poet's work, but in "that great Poem," as Shelley called it, "which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world"—and are still building up, since the work can only be finished with humanity. The man who should write that Poem, otherwise than in the hints of scattered imperfect poems (imperfect in the light of the poetic idea), would cease to be man, being a

paradox, an artificially natural creature—since poetry is an artifice whereby to gain glimpses of a naturalness denied us in life—a divine monster. But in this Poem, as it is being created, even the work of the meanest has its place: if once he has had a moment of unalloyed simplicity and singleness of soul, of communion with a “mood,” one true lyric emotion, he has caught a ray of that light which none can see in its entirety. Since, then, we must accept our humanity, since we cannot always, or even often, live the perfect life, since there is in our existence a great residue of imperfect days, it follows that our poetry has largely Beauty not as its direct subject, but as its justifying aim. We use poetry to express not the perfect Beauty, but our want of it, our aspiration towards it. Setting it far off in some imagined empyrean, the poet may even by a paradox, treat with fierce irony of life devoid of all shadow of it or desire for it. More often his theme will be the tragedy of such beauty as this world affords, or the fate that dogs the soul intoxicated with perfection.

I have not defined poetry: I disavowed, at the outset, all intention to do so. I have wandered, rather than pursued any fixed course, round the boundaries of our subject. Yet I trust that the wanderings have been over firm ground, and not too devious. If you should ask me, after all, to define poetry, I should say that it is a beautiful mystery, and perhaps the definition would be found not incomplete.

II. HISTORICAL.

English poetry, at the period which we are about to study—by specimens, it is true—was largely romantic, as before at its other great time of blossoming, the Elizabethan period.

The history of nearly all modern literature is that of a conflict between what are known as the classical and romantic ideals. The first name is used to designate a method of art which rules the literatures of Greece and Rome, the second to denote the characteristics of mediæval literature. The distinction is by no means an exhaustive one: nor are we to suppose that the works of antiquity are purely classical—Euripides and Virgil are largely romantic—or that modern romantic poetry is altogether devoid of the classical virtues, for the best tragedies of Shakespeare, for all their profusion of incident, are as rigorously arranged in accordance with a controlling idea as any Greek drama.

Classic art is the product of a mind believing in a settled world of reality, order, and law, a world in which one habitually lives, feeling at home there. This spirit expresses itself in literature by a certain air of peace, rest, composure: and from it a noble style is most easily born. Milton is, in English poetry, the great representative thereof. The technical qualities of classic art are a clearness of style and, particularly, a simplicity of arrangement. The parts are subordinated to the whole in order that the idea may become evident. Beauty of incident and detail is often sacrificed, if it should even seem to threaten

the absolute plainness of the idea. The classic artist is distinguished from the romantic, not by the possession of ideas, but by the quality he chooses to insist upon of those ideas. He will have no idea that cannot be seen, as it were, in clear everyday light, without mystery or penumbra. No one disputes his right to have them so. But he would be wrong if he argued that such ideas alone answer to reality. All ideas, and more particularly clear ideas, are a creation of the intellect. What we possess in reality is not such concepts, ideas, or thoughts, but moods or states of mind, which exist as united, and are of varying degrees of clearness, from the most mysterious to the most everyday. The intellect is an instrument for analyzing and decomposing them. Thus we disintegrate them into idea, emotion, and sensation. But the imagination should rather deal with the unity, the living reality. The fictive processes of science exist merely to help the imagination towards better apprehension of this unity. Of course, the classic poet does not put us off with pure idea, or he would be no poet. But he accentuates one aspect of the imaginative reality, subordinating and restraining his emotion.

This is a great and noble method of art, as much in accordance with human nature as any other. But it is not the whole method, and is consequently capable of faults. Such are, in the *classicists* (as distinguished from the true classics) an insipidity, arising from the demand that everything should be presented under an aspect of *immediateness* and clarity, when, perhaps, the nature of certain things is that they cannot, without losing their true character, be made

immediate: and an artificiality, since the classic method tends to impose upon the inspiration a law from without, a ready-made convention, instead of a law growing directly out of it. All art is in some degree conventional, but the convention should be found in the matter of art itself.

Now the romantic artist is distinguished from the classical by his sense of mystery and wonder. His art often begins in naive curiosity, the desire to explore strange outlying realms—real or legendary—to escape from the world of fixed law, which often wearies him. He therefore naturally accepts the reality of spiritual states which can only be suggested or adumbrated. All means of expression and suggestion are welcome to him. An often used comparison, drawn from the graphic arts, illustrates this: the romantic is like a colourist in painting, using that means of expression which is most emotional—and, let us add, most natural—whereas the classic is more of a draughtsman, the line being an intellectual means of expression and as much a fiction as the clear concept, since nature does not bound or separate objects by lines—unless it be by Euclidean lines of no breadth. The possession of the romantic inspiration by no means prevents the acquisition of the classic merit of arrangement: Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale* and *La belle dame sans mercy*, both poems of pure romance, are as rigorously ordered as any classicist exercise. Indeed, all good poetry of this century unites both kinds of qualities. The faults of the romantic spirit are: that in its quest for beauty with an element of strangeness in it, it often is satisfied with the merely strange and sometimes with the purely

horrible, where the classic might miss beauty by overmuch attention to the formal concept; also, that its childish curiosity and delight in strange beauty causes it often to forget the significance of beauty, the idea. Thus, to recur again to the myths, a classic may miss the signification of a myth, but not through want of having sought for it: whereas the puerile mediaeval imagination often took the creatures of mythology as given, as existing *per se* in an amusing world of fancy, and, half believing in them, played with them, often distorting them into grotesques. This tendency to be absorbed in incident and detail, without reference to the necessary idea, is a besetting sin of the romantic spirit, and sometimes becomes mere brainlessness. From neglect of the intellectual element in art comes again a lack of control, of composure, and consequently of style; emotion, being unrestrained by thought, runs loose into trouble, restlessness, and vulgar rant.

Another point of difference between the two schools, and one of significance for this period of English verse, is their treatment of nature. The classic poet generally relegates nature to the background: the romantic makes of it an integral and intimate part of his mood; the earlier part of this introduction will give the student what I conceive to be the right view of this subject. The true art, embracing man and nature, is the symbolic, which both classic and romantic art become, at their best. By it the mood, in its essence, is always presented (or suggested) completely, as a unity, and its beauty is constituted by all those correspondences between nature and spiritual life, out of which the myths arise. The difference between the romantic and classical treatment

of nature is so marked that by this test alone we can distinguish the romantic passages in Greek or Latin poetry.

In the Elizabethan age, to which Blake and Keats during the period which we are about to study, turned, English poetry was romantic, exaggeratedly so. Its character is largely lyrical, even when dramatic: thus the personages of Shakespeare and of many of his contemporaries not merely express themselves in dramatic verse, but in moments of crisis become, on their own account, poets, and vent their feelings lyrically. This disrespect for literary form—peculiarly English, as far as the drama is concerned—was allied with a tendency to exaggerate individual oddities¹ (*humours*, as they were called) and a tendency towards preciousness and conceits, an affectation of ingenuity which everywhere accompanies the youth of romantic literature. Elizabethan literature itself, threatened to be choked by the conceit and the romantic poetry written after Shakespeare's death, finally died of its own ingenuity. The "conceit" arises from this, that a poet is not content to limit his image to the natural relations constituting it, but, dwelling on it with absurd affection and drawing it out with perverse cleverness, loses himself in a labyrinth of remote analogies, fantastically strange and sometimes absolutely silly. The extreme example, perhaps, of the "conceit" in English verse is the often beautiful poetry of Richard Crashaw (1615-1652), and the classic instance is his ode on

¹ The classic tendency being to turn the moods into abstract types of character, psychological sculptures: whereas they are really intellectual raptures.

the *Weeping of the Magdalen*, wherein the eyes of Magdalen become "two walking baths," "portable and compendious oceans," and her tears, being drawn off in bottles by the angels, are "a brisk cherub's breakfast."

Against such ingenuity run mad a reaction followed. What is known as the classical school of English literature began in the middle of the seventeenth and extended down to the later decades of the eighteenth century. Its best poet is Dryden, its best-known glory Pope. But it should rather be called the classicist school. The true classical master in English verse is Milton, and he reacted against none, being himself, as Shakespeare, whom he loved, was. The so-called "classical" school was not classical, because imagination was wanting in its verse. The verse of this period is an elegant presentation of the ideas of the market-place and the court, with refined and witty comment thereon: or it satirizes mere circumstance of social life. A striking characteristic is that writers of this time entitled their works, *Poems on several occasions*: there being no "occasion" for writing true poetry except the poetic genius and inspiration of the writer. Another is the amount of literary criticism now done in verse: Pope, as, just before him, Boileau in France, imitated with his *Essays* and *Epistles* that least poetic among well-known, and even among some less-known, Latin poets, Horace. Since common-sense—they called it "wit"—was the most-prized quality of these "classical" poets, their style was formal, ruled by laws from without. They even renounced all the rich possibilities of English rhythm for the monotonous measure of the rhymed heroic

line ambling along by couplets. The worst fault of this school was that, resolving after all to be poetic, it invented that misbegotten jargon known as "poetic diction." The seventeenth-century conceit was bad enough, but then the seventeenth-century poet had not bound himself down to the use of one everlasting conceit. He could be natural, imaginative, fantastic, affected, precious, and silly by turns. Now to call a horse "an impatient courser," a cold bath "a gelid cistern," a caterpillar "the crawling scourge that smites the leafy plain," is the operation of a mind more prosaic than that which begets conceits. And to confine oneself for ever to the use of such "elegant" periphrasis, and never even by any chance to call a spade a spade, is to end in a dull silliness from which the older maker of conceits was preserved by his own ingenuity. This end was an honour reserved to the later classicists of the eighteenth century. And if such language as theirs be not "conceit" in a worse sense, mechanical, joyless, unimaginative, then the word should not be attached to the seventeenth century extravagance.

This indolence of style was the effect of poverty of imagination and the cause of further impoverishment of imagination, which in turn reacted on style. Certain it is that when Blake sounded his "trumpet-note before dawn," the poem *To the Muses*, English poetry was in a state of extravagant impoverishment. Blake's lucky ignorance of most "classical" poetry and his early acquaintance with the Elizabethans made of him the precursor of a poetic age, second to the Elizabethan only in that it possesses no Shakespeare,

superior to it in number of individual geniuses. Burns, in Scotland, re-awakened the lyrical spirit as Blake had aroused it in England. Then came Coleridge and Wordsworth, the latter waging inexpiable war on the "poetic diction."¹ These men had had their earlier precursors, Gray and Collins, in the very middle of the eighteenth century: but their work was too small in bulk to come with large impact on the inert age. The real change in English verse dates from the two last decades of the last century.

It must not be supposed that all the poetry written during the period under survey was romantic. There is no incompatibility between the excellences of classical and those of romantic art. It is also peculiar to the nineteenth century, the heir of all the ages, that classical and romantic style should exist side by side, that both should unite to form the style of a single poet. Lyricism, the lonely and personal note, the worship of beauty—these things are not necessarily romantic. It was an accident of English literary history that the so-called "classical" school should pass over them, choosing rather good sense, "social" and "clear" style, satire. The fact that they were explorers and discoverers aroused in the writers before us a romantic enthusiasm, strengthened when they found themselves akin to the great romantics of Elizabethan times. That they re-discovered nature, forgotten during the "polite" and urban days of literature, was another potent factor therein.

Coleridge and Scott are, of all these men, the most thoroughly romantic. They resemble particularly the

¹ The stock periphrasis, namely.

contemporary German romantics or, in France, Chateaubriand, in their cult of the legendary past. Byron was the turbulent romantic: the generation that arose in France, within five years of his death, inherited his attitudinizing habit of revolt. Shelley was a romantic with a tincture of classic influence.

The two men whose life and activity cover this whole period were thoroughly classic in their art. I mean Wordsworth and Landor, both of whom lived to the publication of Arnold's poetry, the term of Landor's existence including even the period of all Arnold's good work, though Wordsworth's good work was done between the years 1798 and 1818, and Landor's work in verse was small in value compared to that of others. Of these two, Landor was classic by training, Wordsworth by some necessity of his own nature, though his attitude towards outer nature is thoroughly romantic. But the bare simplicity of his mind, his preference of everyday life to legend, made for a classic style.

There remains Keats, whom I hold to have been the best endowed of all, the most interesting phenomenon of his time in poetry. Beginning as a romantic, without any other than English models before him, he soon made his own the excellences of classic, without yielding any of the powers of romantic, poetry. He died while on the way towards a great impersonal expression of Beauty, a magnificent symbolic art. He is not merely the great poet of the *Odes* and *Sonnets*, of *La belle dame sans mercy* and *Hyperion*, but more—the greatest of all “the inheritors of unfulfilled renown.”

SELECTIONS FROM ENGLISH POETRY

WILLIAM BLAKE.

It is yet debated whether William Blake was mad or not : one thing is certain, outside the fact of his genius, that he passed and ended his sixty-nine years (1757-1827) in complete happiness. Of his life there is otherwise nothing to tell. Born in London, the second son of a hosier, he soon manifested capacities for poetry—the exquisite song, *How sweet I roamed*, here given, was written before his fourteenth year—for drawing, and for seeing visions. He was soon apprenticed to an engraver, and earned sufficient bread to the end of his days by practice of the engraver's art. He married in 1782 a fitting mate, who survived him, having been, by her faith in him, the one great help he found among men. So little, indeed, was he inclined to compromise on any point touching his beliefs and enthusiasms that he renounced the patronage of the rich dilettante Hayley, rather than live under influences which he considered depressing for his spirit. It is related that, under the stress of "prophetic" inspiration, he often forgot the drudgery necessary to keep food in the larder ; whereupon his wife would silently, at meal-time, place an empty plate before him, and he would return to his engraving table. He lived inde-

pendent, never doubting a moment as to the faith that was in him, always meeting doubt in others with a rudely sincere reply. Few seem, during his life-time, to have doubted his mental sanity: all seem to have found him a full man, who was good and true.

Blake's work as painter and engraver does not concern us here; but it would be shameful to speak of him without mentioning the wonderful *Inventions to the Book of Job*, drawn and engraved by his own hand. Of these plates, over 20 in number, all are striking and some, particularly the design of the morning stars singing together, sublime and unforgettable. His literary work consists of three books of verse—from which, as from certain poems first published after his death, our selection is made—viz., *Poetical Sketches* 1783, *Songs of Innocence* 1789, and *Songs of Experience* 1794: and the so-called "prophetic" books; viz., *Thel* 1789, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 1790, *The French Revolution, Book I.*, 1791, *The Gates of Paradise* 1793, *The Vision of the Daughters of Albion* 1793, *America* 1793, *Europe* 1794, *The Book of Urizen* 1794, *The Book of Los* 1795, *The Book of Ahania* 1795, *Jerusalem* 1804, *Milton* 1804, *The Ghost of Abel* 1822, *Tiriel* 1875, *Vala* 1893. Of these books all, excepting the *Poetical Sketches* and *French Revolution* (and those left in MS., *Tiriel* and *Vala*), were printed from plates written and illuminated by the author's own hand, colour being added to the monochrome print. The illuminations which surround the text or separate the written pages were, in the first few works, so much accessory decoration, in the later, an expression of the poet's thought equal in value to the text, displaying an occult and visionary imagination, an

invention of strange and mystic creatures, scarcely to be paralleled in modern times.

The "prophetic" books, written in what Mr. Swinburne has aptly termed "choral prose," are the great stumbling-block to admirers of Blake's lyric verse, to his detractors the best proof of his madness. The present editor cannot claim to have been able, even with the aid of Messrs. Ellis and Yeats' magnificent work, to give them the long time necessary to extract any pleasure or profit from them sufficient for forming an opinion. He can merely set on record his impression that Blake suffered, not from madness, but from lack of proper education and literary training; that those who regard his imaginations as forming a coherent whole have much to justify them; and that there is much in Blake's unknown work which is of increasing spiritual importance and deserving of wider notoriety. Many isolated phrases might be cited, packed with essential wisdom: I prefer, for students of this selection, to quote the following well-known lines from *Milton*, as showing that even in the most abstruse periods of "prophecy" Blake's splendour of lyrical expression had not deserted him:

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk over England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold;
Bring me my arrows of desire;

Bring me my spear : O clouds, unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire.

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

Blake described his own work as "visionary," and such it is ; not merely because he saw what we ordinarily call "visions"—and it is impossible to determine how far they were present to his bodily eye—but by reason of its direct intuitive quality. He wastes little time in arguing as to the legitimacy of what he experiences : and this fact, together with the character of those experiences, has made him seem insane to those who have no means of ingress to his world.

He himself has best defined the nature of his work—"an endeavour to restore the Golden Age." This abiding dream of poets, this Eden-state of humanity, the primal innocence, wherein humanity is embodied truth ("every truth is a man," said Blake), wherein all energy is delight and all impulse virtue, needing no rule, this was ever present to Blake : indeed one might say that he lived in it, too fully to express it, since humanity can voice its wants but is almost powerless to express a plenary joy. For Blake, man was a spiritual creature, formed to live in a spiritual world, the body being merely a part of the soul, so that, as he audaciously said, even our digestion is done for us by spirits. To this world imagination or inspiration admits us, as the five senses do to the material world. But the error is to believe in the senses alone. This was, according to Blake, the sin and fall of man : straightway the manacles

of time and space and the "finite wall of flesh" withheld him from Eternity. Energy thus driven back on itself engendered Law and Sin ; "Thought changed the infinite to a serpent," a gnawing dread ; the worship of outer law and fixity and abstract philosophy begat doubt, hostile to full life :

If the sun and moon should doubt,
They'd immediately go out.

Rational Demonstration creeps in ; Inspiration in art is replaced by the "rags of Memory," copying of Nature —against which Blake carried his warfare so far as to reject the model. The world belongs to the Accuser who finds evil in what was meant to be good.

"Nothing," says Blake, "can withstand the fury of my career" ("the fury of a spiritual existence," as he elsewhere calls it) "among the stars of God and in the abysses of the accuser." But the Golden Age could only be brought back among men if all were endowed with that "fury of a spiritual existence," if all the Lord's people were prophets, as Blake would have them, quoting Numbers. As the Eden-life is incommunicable to them that lack it, Blake showed them at least their fallen state, hinting, by implication, the perfect one. A vast myth circulates through his prophetic books, with daemonic powers of strange shape and stranger name, Urizen, Los, Enitharmon, Rintrah and Palambron : and the whole material universe becomes a set of symbols to express spiritual states greater than itself, so that the very stars, to most poets a sign of sublimity, are to Blake but the tokens of our bondage. The myth, obscure enough in that Blake worked from without ordinary life towards life, is rendered obscurer by his

habit of arbitrarily erecting into symbols places wherein certain spiritual experiences had happened to him (Messrs. Ellis and Yeats regard his use of the four quarters of London as an essential key to his message), persons who had crossed his path in life, or negligible actors in contemporary history.

There is little need to apologize for thus dwelling on Blake's prophecy when one holds that his thought was coherent and that fore-shadowings of his later vaticinations are to be found in his early lyric work. Not indeed in the greater number of the poems here given, lyric outbursts prompted by the reading of Elizabethan poetry, though once, in the *Tiger*, Messrs. Ellis and Yeats see a symbol, that of wrath, "a portion of eternity," as Blake calls it, "too great for the eye of man." There too we find, as often in the earlier verses, an image already determined to form part of the symbolic system (see note on Blake, vi. 2). More important is the fact that the *Songs of Innocence* celebrate the Golden Age, as Blake finds it reflected in childhood—a thought akin to that of Wordsworth's *Immortality Ode*, though Blake possesses a finer simplicity than the later poet, and is especially happier in singing of lambs!—and that the *Songs of Experience* fore-shadow the myth of man's fall. Many pieces might have been given expressing fierce indignation at the degradation of innocence, the withering of childhood's bloom of promise, but their expression is too venturesome for those who are to use this book: the *Cradle-song* may stand here for them, with its foreboding of the draw-net that awaits the infant's witless feet.

I.

TO THE MUSES.

Whether on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the Sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased ;

Whether in heaven ye wander fair, 5
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air
Where the melodious winds have birth ;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,
Beneath the bosom of the sea, 10
Wandering in many a coral grove ;
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry ;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoyed in you !
The languid strings do scarcely move, 15
The sound is forced, the notes are few !

II.

TO THE EVENING STAR.

Thou fair-haired Angel of the Evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love—thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed !

Smile on our loves ; and, while thou drawest the 5
 Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy dew¹
 On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes
 In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
 The lake ; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
 And wash the dusk with silver.—Soon, full soon, 10
 Dost thou withdraw ; then the wolf rages wide,
 And the lion glares through the dun forest.
 The fleeces of our flocks are covered with
 Thy sacred dew : protect them with thine influence !

III.

SONG.

How sweet I roamed from field to field,
 And tasted all the summer's pride,
 Till I the Prince of Love beheld
 Who in the sunny beams did glide.

He showed me lilies for my hair, 5
 And blushing roses for my brow :
 He led me through his gardens fair
 Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May-dews my wings were wet,
 And Phœbus fired my vocal rage ; 10
 He caught me in his silken net,
 And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
 Then laughing, sports and plays with me ;
 Then stretches out my golden wing, 15
 And mocks my loss of liberty.

¹ *thy silver dew* in the original.

IV.

SONG.

My silks and fine array,
 My smiles and languished air,
 By love are driven away ;
 And mournful lean Despair
 Brings me yew to deck my grave : 5
 Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heaven
 When springing buds unfold ;
 Oh, why to him was 't given,
 Whose heart is wintry cold ? 10
 His breast is love's all-worshipped tomb,
 Where all love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an axe and spade,
 Bring me a winding-sheet ;
 When I my grave have made, 15
 Let winds and tempests beat :
 Then down I'll lie, as cold as clay.
 True love doth pass away !

V.

A SONG OF SINGING.

PIPING down the valleys wild,
 Piping songs of pleasant glee,
 On a cloud I saw a child,
 And he laughing said to me :
 " Pipe a song about a Lamb ! " 5
 So I piped with merry cheer.
 " Piper, pipe that song again " ;
 So I piped : he wept to hear.

“Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe ;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer !” 10
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

“Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read.”
So he vanished from my sight ;
And I plucked a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear. 20

VI.

THE TIGER.

**TIGER, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?**

In what distant deeps or skies 5
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shouldest and what art
 Could twist the sinews of thy heart? 10
 And, when thy heart began to beat,
 What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

WILLIAM BLAKE.

11

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee? 20

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

VII.

INFANT JOY.

"I HAVE no name;
I am but two days old."
What shall I call thee?
"I happy am,
Joy is my name," 5
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy, but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee;
Thou dost smile, 10
I sing the while;
Sweet joy befall thee!

VIII.

A CRADLE SONG.

SLEEP, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming in the joys of night;
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
 Soft desires I can trace,
 Secret joys and secret smiles,
 Little pretty infant wiles. 5

As thy softest limbs I feel,
 Smiles as of the morning steal 10
 O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
 Where thy little heart doth rest.

Oh the cunning wiles that creep
 In thy little heart asleep!
 When thy little heart doth wake, 15
 Then the dreadful light shall break.

IX.

AH, SUNFLOWER.

AH, Sunflower, weary of time,
 Who countest the steps of the sun ;
 Seeking after that sweet golden clime
 Where the traveller's journey is done ;
 Where the Youth pined away with desire, 5
 And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,
 Arise from their graves, and aspire
 Where my Sunflower wishes to go !

X.

LOVE'S SECRET.

NEVER seek to tell thy love,
 Love that never told can be ;
 For the gentle wind doth move
 Silently, invisibly.

WILLIAM BLAKE. 13

I told my love, I told my love, 5
I told her all my heart,
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears.
Ah ! she did depart !

Soon after she was gone from me,
A traveller came by, 10
Silently, invisibly :
He took her with a sigh.

ROBERT BURNS.

ROBERT BURNS, who died in 1796 at the age of 37—an age curiously fatal to many men of genius (Raphael, Purcell, Watteau, for instance)—was the son of an Ayrshire peasant. Hard labour at the plough in youth seems to have injured his health for ever and predisposed him to the wretched and squalid dissipation which helped to kill him and made him the scandal of his parish. Much must be forgiven him, considering the parish. His native country, which annually and hourly deifies him, could find no better lot for him than a gauger's.

The work which has caused Burns to be accepted into the literature of England, which won him the homage of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats, was curiously enough not done in English. When Burns wrote in English—as in the *Cottar's Saturday Night*—he merely reproduced the worst vices of the eighteenth century. Nor was it the realistic work of the *Jolly Beggars*, or the stinging parish satires. It was the lyrics and songs whereby Burns, along with Blake, heralded the new morning of poetry in Britain.

These songs, of which three are here offered, were written in vernacular Scots: not, it must be remembered,

the Ayrshire dialect which Burns spoke, but a literary language which had had its artists centuries before him. As Messrs. Henley & Henderson have made plain in their *Centenary* edition, Burns was the last and finest of this literary dynasty, consummating what his predecessors had begun. He owed them not merely example but also the hint for many of his songs, which are the development and perfection of some motive which had occurred to a forgotten forbear in poetry. The song *A red, red rose* is indeed a mosaic of fragments that lay loose in many older poems, and in Burns' hands became pure gold of song.

I.

OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW.

Or a' the airts the wind can blaw,
 I dearly like the west,
 For there the bonnie lassie lives,
 The lassie I lo'e best :
 There wild woods grow, and rivers row, 5
 And monie a hill between ;
 But day and night my fancy's flight
 Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
 I see her sweet and fair : 10
 I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
 I hear her charm the air :
 There's not a bonnie flower that springs
 By fountain, shaw, or green ;
 There's not a bonnie bird that sings, 15
 But minds me o' my Jean.

II.

MY BONNIE MARY.

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
 And fill it in a silver tassie ;
 That I may drink before I go
 A service to my bonnie lassie !

ROBERT BURNS.

The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith, Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the Ferry, The ship rides by the Berwick-law, And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.	5
The trumpets sound, the banners fly, The glittering spears are rankéd ready, The shouts o' war are heard afar, The battle closes thick and bloody. But it's no' the roar o' sea or shore Wad mak' me langer wish to tarry, Nor shouts o' war that's heard afar, It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary !	10 15

III.

A RED, RED ROSE.

O, my luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June :
O, my luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass, 5
So deep in luve am I :
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun : 10
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve !
And fare thee weel a while !
And I will come again, my luve, 15
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

BORN in Cumberland 1770, William Wordsworth proceeded to Cambridge, the foster-mother of many great poets, in 1787. Passing to France in 1791, and there making acquaintance with some of the nobler spirits of the French Revolution, he became infected with their enthusiasm, and, like many other poets of the time, looked on the Revolution as "big with all the hopes of man." The war that presently ensued between England and France threw him into an agony: his mother-country seemed sunk in guilt, and in France he saw liberty desecrated by crime. This was the only crisis of Wordsworth's life: the rest was passed in peace. After a visit to Germany he settled down in the Lake District of England, at Grasmere, and herewith, as Mr. Myers says, "the external events of his life may be said to come to an end." At first on a pittance, always on a most moderate income, he here cultivated poetry, in the company of a wife and sister, fitted, not merely to comprehend, but to aid, his genius. The only other outside influence on Wordsworth's development was that of Coleridge, with whom, in 1798, he published a volume entitled *Lyrical Ballads*.

This rustic and domestic life was the proper ground

for the development of Wordsworth's poetic power. He was a man of long emotions and lasting memories, and it was his sense of the "old sanctities" of home and family, which, emerging with advancing time, saved him from the unrest produced in his soul by the Revolution. His own conception of poetry does not at all square with that which is based on hasty and passing surges of "inspiration." Poetry was for him "emotion recollected in tranquillity," the product of contemplation turned backward on the abiding spiritual forces of life. These forces he found among his well-loved Cumbrian shepherds, dwelling in perpetual communion with Nature where she is at her simplest, hill and cloud and sky. It was Wordsworth's task to bring out the beauty that lies in humble life, in our common humanity, in domesticity and toil, and to bring this simple beauty into connection with the spiritual significance of Nature.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

He had the power of deriving deep joy from the slightest apparent causes, of finding, as he said, "thoughts that lie too deep for tears" in "the simplest flower that blows." He possessed an intimate sympathy with all that was innocent, peculiarly with children : as we shall read in the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, he regarded the intuitions of childhood as the guiding-star of life :

The Child is Father of the Man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety :

—piety, as the Romans understood it, a reverential affection, not merely for what is avowedly divine, but for what is household, every-day, and familiar. "In these things too is God."

To this spirit Wordsworth has given expression in poems that are part of the high achievement of English verse. One may point particularly, among the pieces here given, to those grouped under the title *Lucy*, in the first of which the spiritual action of Nature finds almost unexampled expression. The style of Wordsworth at his best is distinguished by a simplicity that is almost bareness, yet never devoid of grace or dignity. Such lines as

In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,

possess a style which arises from complete absorption of the poet in his inspiration, and seems to transcend all mere "literary" art, a style, as Wordsworth himself termed it, "inevitable," justifying Matthew Arnold's remark that Nature herself seems to write his poem for him.

Unfortunately, as in all things human, there is another side, and here a black other side, to the shield. It has been well said that only the bad poets are always equal to themselves. But hardly any other poet of first rank has written so badly as Wordsworth at times has written, no other has written so much that is merely bad. I do not allude to the dreadful lapses into prose which so often follow some of Wordsworth's purest poetry: these may happen to any writer. I speak of the vast masses of undigested and indigestible trash—

from the poetic point of view—in which he indulged. Two causes thereof may be set down. In the first place Wordsworth was profoundly egotistic. A contemplator, producing poetry by the “recollection of emotion in tranquillity,” frugal in his spiritual joys as in his material life, he was deeply interested in all his experiences, even the smallest, and he thought that they would interest everyone else, to the extent of writing his whole mental autobiography in blank verse. So it was not enough for him to express his *poetic* emotions, he felt bound to prefix and append to them the purely personal circumstances which gave birth to and accompanied them. And often he was content with these circumstances alone. There is for instance a poem, much admired by Wordsworthians, wherein he relates of a certain boy, that

a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain torrents ; or the visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind,

and that he himself, Wordsworth, has often stood a long half-hour looking on that boy's grave. This is not as bad as many of Wordsworth's poems : yet we feel that we are cheated ; we demand to be made to feel *what* that “visible scene” was *as received* into the boy's mind, in what mood Wordsworth looked upon his grave. I am not of those who complain that Wordsworth is too mild and dull, lacking in “stimulus” : poetry can be wrought of contemplative passion as of any other ; and least of all do I hold that a poet should, metaphorically, seize one by the collar and shout in one's ear. But I refuse to accept the preliminaries to poetry, even when

well versified, as poetry itself. Secondly, as Browning later was endowed with the capacity of arguing at any length in blank verse, so was Wordsworth capable of dissertation at any length in the same medium. His moral enthusiasm led him to unpardonable lengths, including a deadly length of writing. Poetry can be created out of almost any impulse: only, that impulse must first be transformed in the imagination, as motion is transformed into heat, light, electricity. It was unfortunate that Wordsworth should write passages of unmitigated platitude: still more unfortunate that these passages should be promulgated to the world as his best by the Wordsworthians, who find in him an ethical philosophy, most easily reducible to system. Such desert spaces in his work, by their vast extent, have made him the favourite, if not the only poet, of that dreariest moral phenomenon, the English Freethinker or Agnostic, just as Tennyson's dubious speculations on science and religion have delivered him into the hands of the Philistine.

The bare simplicity of Wordsworth's poetry, as well as the dreariness of his prosings, long retarded his appreciation by the public, and made him for years a butt to the slashing reviewers of his time, whom even now weaker descendants would copy. When recognition came, seven years before his death, he was made Poet Laureate, to be succeeded in 1850 by Tennyson. But his fame was first established after his death, principally by the advocacy of Matthew Arnold, and now he has, like every other great poet, his band of feeble imitators.

I.

LUCY.

1.

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This Child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own. 5

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower, 10
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn,
Or up the mountain springs ; 15
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ; 20
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

3.

A slumber did my spirit seal ; 55
 I had no human fears :
 She seemed a thing that could not feel
 The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
 She neither hears nor sees ; 60
 Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
 With rocks, and stones, and trees.

II.

TO THE CUCKOO.

O BLITHE New-comer ! I have heard,
 I hear thee and rejoice.
 O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,
 Or but a wandering Voice ?

While I am lying on the grass 5
 Thy twofold shout I hear,
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale
 Of sunshine and of flowers, 10
 Thou bringest unto me a tale
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !
 Even yet thou art to me
 No bird, but an invisible thing, 15
 A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my school-boy days
 I listened to ; that Cry
 Which made me look a thousand ways
 In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove
 Through woods and on the green ;
 And thou wert still a hope, a love ;
 Still longed for, never seen !

And I can listen to thee yet ; 25
 Can lie upon the plain
 And listen, till I do beget
 That golden time again.

O blesséd Bird ! the earth we pace
 Again appears to be 30
 An unsubstantial, faery place,
 That is fit home for thee !

III.

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass !
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5
 And sings a melancholy strain ;
 O listen ! for the vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
 More welcome notes to weary bands 10

Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands :
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides. 15

Will no one tell me what she sings ?—
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago : 20
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day ?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang 25
 As if her song could have no ending ;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending ;—
 I listen'd, motionless and still ;
 And, as I mounted up the hill, 30
 The music in my heart I bore
 Long after it was heard no more.

IV.

ODE.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOL-
LECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
 The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparell'd in celestial light,

The glory and the freshness of a dream. 5
 It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
 The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes, 10
 And lovely is the Rose,
 The Moon doth with delight
 Look round her when the heavens are bare,
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair ; 15
 The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound 20
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief :
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong.
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ; 25
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
 The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay ;
 Land and sea 30
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—
 Thou Child of Joy
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
 Shepherd-boy ! 35

IV.

Ye blesséd Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make ; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal, 40
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning ;
 And the Children are culling 45
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm,
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm :—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear ! 50
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,
 A single Field which I have look'd upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is gone :
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat : 55
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting, 60
 And cometh from afar :
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home : 65
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,

But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,	
He sees it in his joy ;	70
The Youth, who daily farther from the east	
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,	
And by the vision splendid	
Is on his way attended ;	
At length the Man perceives it die away,	75
And fade into the light of common day.	

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;	
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,	
And, even with something of a Mother's mind	
And no unworthy aim,	80
The homely Nurse doth all she can	
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate, Man,	
Forget the glories he hath known,	
And that imperial palace whence he came.	

VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,	85
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !	
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,	
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,	
With light upon him from his father's eyes !	
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,	90
Some fragment from his dream of human life,	
Shaped by himself with newly-learnéd art ;	
A wedding or a festival,	
A mourning or a funeral ;	
And this hath now his heart,	95
And unto this he frames his song :	
Then will he fit his tongue	
To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;	
But it will not be long	
Ere this be thrown aside,	100

And with new joy and pride
 The little Actor cons another part ;
 Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
 That life brings with her in her equipage ; 105
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy Soul's immensity ;
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep 110
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal Mind,—
 Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
 On whom those truths do rest, 115
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 A Presence which is not to be put by ; 120
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ? 125
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

IX.

O joy ! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live, 130
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction : not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest— 135
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—
 Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise ; 140
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings ;
 Blank misgivings of a Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realised, 145
 High instincts, before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :
 But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may, 150
 Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
 Are yet a master-light of all our seeing ;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake, 155
 To perish never ;
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy ! 160
 Hence, in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither ;
 Can in a moment travel thither, 165
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound ! 170
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May !
 What though the radiance which was once so bright 175
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower ;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind ; 180
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be ;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering ;
 In the faith that looks through death, 185
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forbode not any severing of our loves !
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;
 I only have relinquished one delight 190
 To live beneath your more habitual sway :
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
 Is lovely yet ; 195
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which we live, 200
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

V.

SONNETS.

1.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE,
 SEPT. 3, 1802.

EARTH has not anything to show more fair :
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty :
 This City now doth, like a garment, wear

The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare, 5
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ; 10
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !

The river glideth at his own sweet will :
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still !

2.

“THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US ; LATE
AND SOON.”

THE World is too much with us ; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !

This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ; 5
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;
For this, for every thing, we are out of tune ;

It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ; 10
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,

Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

3.

“SURPRISED BY JOY—IMPATIENT AS THE
WIND.”

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the Wind—
I turned to share the transport—Oh ! with whom
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find ?

Love, faithful love, recall'd thee to my mind— 5
But how could I forget thee ? Through what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind

To my most grievous loss ?—That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore, 10
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,

Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more ;
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

4.

“IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND
FREE.”

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free ;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;

The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea : 5
Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.

Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought 10
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :

Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SCOTT, one of the best-loved names in English letters, was born in 1771. The sickliness of his childhood happily left him idle, to hear old songs and legends of the moss-troopers and his own Border ancestry. At school even he was an incomparable story-teller, and an eager reader of all romantic and ballad poetry. On coming of age he was called to the bar, but literature claimed his love. One of his earliest publications was a collection of that Border Minstrelsy which he so much loved. With the publication first of his verse romances, later of his novels, he gained fame and wealth: the latter he lost by the failure of the publishing house of Constable & Ballantyne. The labour to pay off his debts by his literary production finally killed him: he died in 1832.

Scott's poetry is voluminous. The best-known element of it is the long romances or narrative poems, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, etc. In all these the inspiration is heroic, arising partly from Scott's love of the chivalric mediaeval past (it was this that made him such an influence at the Romantic revival of 1830 in France), partly from his love of open-air, adventurous life. A quatrain of his expresses this well:

Sound, sound the clarion! Blow the fife!
And to the sensual world proclaim
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.

Mr. Gosse has well judged this matter (*Questions at Issue*, pp. 109, 110): "The *Waverley Novels* form Scott's great claim to our reverence; his long narrative poems are really *Waverley Novels* told in easy, ambling verse, and to a great measure spoiled by such telling. The best passages are those in which, with skill not less than that of Milton, Scott marshals heroic lists of Highland proper names. His lyrics, of very unequal merit, are occasionally of wondrous beauty. He published eight absolutely perfect lyrical pieces, and about as many more that were very good indeed. This is much, and to how few can so high a tribute be paid!" Two of these lyrics are presented here: others are *Proud Maisie*, *County Guy*, *A weary lot is thine, fair maid*, *O Bignall banks are fresh and fair*.

Scott ceased writing verse-romances when he saw that Byron could write them, if not better, at least in a way and with a matter more calculated to strike the public. He then turned to story-telling in prose, where his genius found wider scope, handling not merely romantic and mediaeval life, as in *The Tullisman* and *The Fair Maid of Perth*, but creating delightful modern comedy in *The Antiquary*, powerful modern tragedy in *St. Ronan's Well*. There is no better work for a youngster to happen upon, none more likely to be a delightful companion to him later, both for its own intrinsic merit and for old memory's sake, than the work of Walter Scott, both in prose and verse.

I.

CORONACH.

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing 5
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow !

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary, 10
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing 15
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber ! 20
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone ; and for ever !

II.

TIME.

"WHY sitt'st thou by that ruin'd hall,
Thou aged carle so stern and grey?
Dost thou its former pride recall,
Or ponder how it passed away?"

"Know'st thou not me?" the Deep Voice cried, 5
"So long enjoy'd, so oft misused—
Alternate, in thy fickle pride,
Desired, neglected, and accused?"

"Before my breath, like blazing flax,
Man and his marvels pass away, 10
And changing empires wane and wax,
Are founded, flourish, and decay!"

"Redeem mine hours—the space is brief—
While in my glass the sand-grains shiver,
And measureless thy joy or grief, 15
When TIME and thou shall part for ever!"

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, with Wordsworth the great morning-light of English poetry at the beginning of this century, was born in Devonshire, 1772, the son of a clergyman. The son's love of multifarious knowledge and tendency to metaphysical subtleties were curiously foreshadowed in the father, who quoted the Bible to his village congregation in the original Hebrew, and proposed, among other innovations in Latin grammar destined to simplify the study thereof to school-boys just beginning it, that the ablative case should be termed the "quale-quare-quidditive." The youth Coleridge was of amazing promise, a wonder to all that knew him. Charles Lamb, who was his schoolmate at Christ's Hospital—a foundation, the scholars of which are known, from their garb, as "Blue-coat boys"—and remained the friend of his life, bursts into lyricism when recalling those early years: "Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the dayspring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard! How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between

the *speech* and the *garb* of the young *Mirandula*¹), to hear thee enfold in thy deep and sweet intonations the mysteries of Iamblichus or Plotinus² (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in the Greek or Pindar, while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy*!"

Such was Coleridge in his "dawn of splendour," before he entered upon life. That life is hard to read. The career of every great man, however broken and marred, yields some sense and admits of being interpreted as the manifestation of some great human idea: the famous ones of our race are all types. Coleridge presents himself (to an eye possibly incapable of perceiving the full truth) as the Dreamer, with scant touch upon life, full of marvellous powers that always fail of achievement, and even, it must be said, as the Dreamer who lacks unity and individuality in his dream.

His outer life is a continual drifting. He went to Cambridge; left it for a while and enlisted in the cavalry under the expressive name of Silas Titus Cumberback; returned. He caught the infection of the French Revolution in more violent form than Wordsworth, afterwards recanting: certain vague libertarian ideas, dignified by the name, not more foolish than many another, of Pantisocracy, led him into a marriage, but after a few years he drifted apart from wife and family. A meeting with Wordsworth was the outer cause of his brilliant poetical achievement (1797-1800): his earlier

¹ Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), an Italian scholar famous for his precocity and for the range of his learning.

² Leaders of the Neo-platonic School of Mysticism; Iamblichus in Syria (d. circa 330 A.D.), Plotinus at Alexandria (204-269 A.D.).

poems had been undistinguished, his later never regained the wizard power that was his for a short time. Then came opium: and for years he was a prey to the dejection which inspired his last great poem. He passed finally in 1818 into the hands of good friends who cared for him till his death in 1834. The metaphysical brooding which had possessed him as a child and had mastered him ever since his imagination had deserted him, resulted in a few desultory works: he dreamed always of a *magnum opus* which should overthrow all that had been done in English Philosophy since the time of Charles II. and be a handmaid of Christianity, but the work was never written. It was not the only work of which Coleridge dreamed: great title-pages and prolegomena of many exist, but nothing beyond.

Ill-health and opium were among the causes why Coleridge did not completely realize himself. There is a fantastic theory, with nothing approaching nearer demonstration than the empty general statement that mental phenomena must have physical conditions, that Coleridge's sudden efflorescence in verse was due merely to the stimulus of opium; but this may be dismissed to Limbo. Rather Coleridge appears as a magnificent intellectual organization, a spiritual force of the finest—Wordsworth said that though “he had seen many men do wonderful things, Coleridge was the only wonderful *man* he had met”—which, having proved itself peerless in everything it touched, cared not to pass beyond the beginning. Or rather, there was so much that interested him, so much to think about, that he could not find the time for the drudgery necessary to achievement. Narrower spirits may devote, with profit, their hours of

darkness to the development and expression of what they have perceived in rare hours of insight: Coleridge was continually rapt away. Thus it was that, having proven himself, in his twenty-fifth year, the peer of any that sing: having shown himself, in lectures which we possess only in fragmentary notes, the prince of Shakespearean critics; having been even (as Mr. Traill, who assuredly ought to be qualified to judge, tells us) a journalist of supreme excellence: he contented himself with the medium of the spoken word. Sometimes he preached—always, if we are to believe Charles Lamb, who, to his question, "Did you ever hear me preach?" humorously answered, "I never heard you do anything else." Or, again we find him on Highgate hill, that looks on London, sitting, as Carlyle tells us, "as a kind of Magus, girt in mystery and enigma; his Dodona¹ oak-grove whispering strange things"—fragmentary oracles from that great metaphysical work which, never being realized, existed only as an ideal goal and pole-star of his speculations.

Carlyle, a rival lay-preacher, fulfilled with thought more realistic than Coleridge's, and Mr. Swinburne, finely impatient of all that is not song, have set the fashion of jibing at these same speculations; the former regarding them as so much drivel, absolutely; the latter passing them by contemptuously to feast in rapture on Coleridge's poetry. An apish crowd has echoed them, which would look still more foolish than it does if it were asked to justify its sneers. One more qualified to judge, a hard-headed sober modern philosopher, Dr.

¹ Dodona: a grove of oaks in Epirus, the great oracle of Jupiter, who there spoke as the wind among the trees.

Shadworth Hodgson, has thought it no small pride to own Coleridge as his father in philosophy. Beyond this the matter does not interest us here: we are occupied with Coleridge as poet.

To set about comparing poets and arranging them in order of merit is not merely a labour fraught with chance and peril, but also the labour of the foolish, which wearieth him—though it may afford diversion to the wise, looking on. Of Shakespeare and Milton it can for instance only be said that each is in his kind supreme, and we need them both. But there are cases where a comparison is forced upon us from the outset, and where such comparison helps to nearer understanding of each individual poet. Circumstances have thus united Coleridge and Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats. And I regret that the duty imposed on me by the present task of formulating my thoughts on these poets in accordance with certain general ideas (imperfect, no doubt) concerning poetry compels me to seem harsh in each case to Coleridge and Shelley. Let the errors of greater critics, Arnold and Mr. Swinburne for example, cause my unimportant doing of injustice to pass unnoticed.

When Coleridge and Wordsworth united forces in 1797 to write the *Lyrical Ballads* their ideal was that of an imaginative realism, to be illustrated in two ways: Coleridge dealing with fantastic themes of legend and romance in such a way as to produce upon the reader an impression of detailed reality; Wordsworth treating subjects of common homely life, but by imaginative alchemy touching them to finer issues. This kinship of their aims, their collaboration in a volume, and the fact that Coleridge for a time resided near Wordsworth, led

to the absurd name of the "Lake School" being bestowed on the two poets and others connected with them merely by friendship and passing enthusiasm for the Revolution.

Coleridge's contribution to the *Lyrical Ballads* was the famous *Ancient Mariner*—and it is told that almost the only sale of the book was among seafaring men, seduced by the title of this poem into the belief that something of nautical import would be found between the boards. The vein of poetry which he here opened yielded the unfinished *Christabel* and the fragment of *Kubla Khan*, besides some minor pieces; then ceased. And Wordsworth's method was not only richer, but its riches were of greater import to mankind. For this reason, that art and imagination are great things, but art and imagination applied to the task of transmuting life are nobler still. There is here no question of absolute poetry: poetry is a human function, "the product of the human instrument": and indeed absolute poetry, if it were ever to be written, would be the complete expression of the total human soul. Nor is there any false claim that art should teach morality: the remarks on Wordsworth and Poe will make this clearer to the student. What is here maintained is that the *Ancient Mariner* of Coleridge, despite his marvellous adventures, must remain remote from us: whereas "the leech-gatherer on the lonely moor," who could give Wordsworth "human strength," against thoughts of

the fear that kills;
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;
And mighty Poets in their misery dead;

is a great human gain of the imagination. Coleridge's imaginings are those of one dreaming, apart from life, over his "old folios,"

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
such as yield their wealth in the marginal gloss in prose that accompanies the *Ancient Mariner*. Apart from life, I said ; not meaning thereby that a poet does not come into most fitting relation with life by searching his heart in retirement, but that Coleridge did not, as Wordsworth, use his solitude to such purpose. Mr. Traill, indeed, seems to find in the *Ode on Dejection* at least a hint of the possibility that Coleridge might have become a great interpreter of the sequestered soul, the soul that has "shut its door upon itself," even upon nature, knowing that

we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live :

as indeed she can only receive spiritual significance after passing through "the alembic of the brain." But we must estimate Coleridge as a poet by his actual achievement, and the *Dejection* Ode appears as a dirge over the passing of his "shaping spirit of Imagination."

Coleridge then excels in evoking, out of the past, strange particular creatures and regions of romance, without reference to some human idea (such as we find in the work of a true mythologic poet), and with all the atmosphere of things gone and forgotten, now "re-visiting the glimpses of the moon," with all the atmosphere of wonder which they suggest. Thus in *The*

Knight's Tomb; thus in the *Song* here quoted from *Remorse*, one of his unsuccessful dramas :

Hear, sweet spirit, hear the spell,
Lest a blacker charm compel !
So shall the midnight breezes swell
With thy deep long-lingering knell.

And at evening evermore,
In a Chapel on the shore,
Shall the Chaunters, sad and saintly,
Yellow tapers burning faintly,
Doleful masses chaunt for thee,
Miserere Domine !

Hark ! the cadence dies away
On the quiet moonlight sea :
The boatmen rest their oars and say,
Miserere Domine !

That has all the quality of something dreamed of by a winter fire, towards evening, after poring over some ancient tome. But his finest poetry reveals, besides that enchanting music that was to the full his, and his alone, the inspiration of pure dream. "All through the *Ancient Mariner*," says Mrs. Meynell, "Coleridge uses the sun, moon, and stars as a great dream uses them when the sleeping imagination is obscurely threatened with illness: we see them like apparitions, he reveals an exaltation of the senses, which is the most poetical thing that can befall a simple poet." Here—though the student should know the poem—are the stanzas that tell how the Mariner's ear was bewitched :

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun ;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky,
I heard a sky-lark sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise as of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Of such nature was Coleridge's poetic achievement, and with it alone we have to deal. The thinker Coleridge must be passed over, for his thought and his poetry were separate, not married, as in the case of Wordsworth, or more gloriously still, in that of Keats.

I.

KUBLA KHAN.

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
 A stately pleasure-dome decree :
 Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
 Through caverns measureless to man
 Down to a sunless sea. 5
 So twice five miles of fertile ground
 With walls and towers were girdled round ;
 And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
 Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
 And here were forests ancient as the hills, 10
 Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh ! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
 Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !
 A savage place ! as holy and enchanted
 As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted 15
 By woman wailing for her demon-lover !
 And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
 As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
 A mighty fountain momentarily was forced :
 Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst 20
 Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
 Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :
 And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
 It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
 Five miles, meandering with a mazy motion 25
 Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,

Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,
 And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :
 And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
 Ancestral voices prophesying war ! 30

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
 Floated midway on the waves ;
 Where was heard the mingled measure
 From the fountain and the caves.
 It was a miracle of rare device, 35
 A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice !
 A damsel with a dulcimer
 In a vision once I saw :
 It was an Abyssinian maid,
 And on her dulcimer she played, 40
 Singing of Mount Abora.
 Could I revive within me
 Her symphony and song,
 To such a deep delight 'twould win me
 That with music loud and long, 45
 I would build that dome in air,
 That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
 And all who heard should see them there,
 And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair ! 50
 Weave a circle round him thrice,
 And close your eyes with holy dread,
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

II.

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB.

WHERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn ?
 Where may the grave of that good man be ?—

By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree !
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear, 5
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roar'd in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust ;— 10
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

DYING at the age of 89 in 1864, having been present at the birth of our poetic era, having lived to receive the homage of Browning and Mr. Swinburne, Landor presents to our view a curious double character: "the inner being that of a stately and benign philosopher, the outer that of a passionate and rebellious schoolboy" (Mr. Colvin). It was this latter character that led him into quarrels with friends and wife, into law suits innumerable—in his 83rd year he was condemned to £1000 costs and damages. The former made him akin to whatever was noble, dignified, and "Roman." The epithet Roman best describes him in the aspect: his love of liberty was that of liberty as the Romans understood it, a grave and austere republicanism.

Landor's chief work has been done in prose: *Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men and Statesmen*, wherein the great men of the past, to whom Landor felt himself akin, are summoned up to discourse on the themes he loved in a noble and severe style. His work in verse is not so satisfying: it is "classical," but, while not imitative, seems that of a student, lacking spontaneous life, as verse of purely literary inspiration often does. It is often most successful when familiar—as in some *Epistles*—

while still keeping an air of antiquity in its form. Landon's poetic fame will always be most strongly based on the *Rose Aylmer* here given. As the nature of this book does not allow of wide selection from his verse for our text, I shall quote here a noble passage of blank verse, descriptive of the character that was Landon's ideal :

No airy and light passion stirs abroad
To ruffle or to soothe him ; all are quell'd
Beneath a mightier, sterner stress of mind.
Wakeful he sits, and lonely, and unmoved,
Beyond the arrows, shouts, and views of men ;
As oftentimes an eagle, ere the sun
Throws o'er the varying earth his early ray,
Stands solitary, stands immovable
Upon some highest cliff, and rolls his eye,
Clear, constant, unobservant, unabased,
In the cold light, above the dews of morn.

I.

ROSE AYLMER.

AH what avails the sceptred race,
Ah what the form divine !
What every virtue, every grace !
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes 5
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and sighs
I consecrate to thee.

II.

ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY.

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife,
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art ;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

CHARLES LAMB.

CHARLES LAMB, "gentle-hearted Charles," most loving and best beloved of English writers, was born in 1775 and died in 1834, being all his life a denizen of London and a lover of the city. He was for over thirty years a clerk in the East India office, and spent his days in affectionate company with one sister and some friends. His best work was done in essay-writing and criticism. The *Essays of Elia* display his gentle, humorous, kindly, witty nature, being perhaps the best essays in the language if we understand by essay not a strict treatment of a given subject, but the revelation of the writer's personality, the subject being merely a pretext therefor—just as it hardly matters of what a man converses, if he only possesses the true conversationalist's charm. Lamb's *Specimens of Dramatic Poets contemporary with Shakespeare*, the result of his dalliyings with old folios—his "midnight darlings" as he called them—were, for English literature, the re-discovery of the world of Elizabethan literature: and in spite of the thorough exploration of that world since Lamb's time, his criticisms have lost neither value nor interest. His subtle poetic feeling is better perceptible in his essential characterization of what is fine in Milton, in Shakespeare and his contemporaries, than in

his own verse. The piece here presented, a metrical curiosity, is, in its feeling, true Lamb. Carlyle has spoken contemptuously of its author as a man, but Carlyle had not Lamb's gift of great love. There are few things more touching than the story how Lamb, who survived his beloved Coleridge by only a few months, would often interrupt the conversation of others, after he had sat in brooding silence, with the simple words "Coleridge is dead !"

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES.

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days ;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies ; 5
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women ;
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man ; 10
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly ;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces. 15

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces—

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me ; all are departed ; 20
All. all are gone, the old familiar faces.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

A VOLUMINOUS poet and man of letters, born 1777, died 1844. Of his poetry, little has survived the wear of time. The ballads of *Lochiel* and *Lord Ullin's Daughter* are in the school books ; *Hohenlinden*, *Ye Mariners of England*, and the stately *Battle of the Baltic* are among the best martial poems in the language.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone ! 5
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat 10
Lay their bulwarks on the brine ;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line :

It was ten of April morn by the chime :
As they drifted on their path 15
There was silence deep as death ;
And the boldest held his breath,
For a time.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene, 20
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
“Hearts of oak !” our captains cried ; when each gun
From its adamant lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships, 25
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again ! again ! again !
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane 30
To our cheering sent us back ;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom :—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail,
Or in conflagration pale 35
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hailed them o'er the wave,
“Ye are brothers ! ye are men !
And we conquer but to save :— 40
So peace instead of death let us bring :
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King.” 45

Then Denmark bless'd our chief
 That he gave her wounds repose ;
 And the sounds of joy and grief
 From her people wildly rose,
 As death withdrew his shades from the day : 50
 While the sun looked smiling bright
 O'er a wide and woeful sight,
 Where the fires of funeral light
 Died away.

Now joy, old England, raise 55
 For the tidings of thy might,
 By the festal cities' blaze,
 Whilst the wine-cup shines in light
 And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
 Let us think of them that sleep 60
 Full many a fathom deep
 By thy wild and stormy steep,
 Elsinore !

Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride
 Once so faithful and so true, 65
 On the deck of fame that died,
 With the gallant good Riou :
 Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave !
 While the billow mournful rolls,
 And the mermaid's song condoles, 70
 Singing glory to the souls
 Of the brave !

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

THE "corn-law rhymers," born 1781, died 1849. The financial ruin of his father, and heavy losses on his own part, being attributed by him to the action of the "bread-tax," drove him into the many almost revolutionary movements of the time, that for repeal of the corn-laws, and the reform and chartist agitations. The piece here given is extracted from the *Corn-law Rhymes*, and is one of the few instances where Elliott, a prolific writer of verse, rises clear, though not quite clear, of rhetoric and turgidity.

BATTLE SONG.

DAY, like our souls, is fiercely dark ;
What then ? 'Tis day !
We sleep no more ; the cock crows —hark !
To arms ! away !
They come ! they come ! The knell is rung 5
Of us or them.
Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
Of gold and gem.

What collar'd hound of lawless sway, To famine dear—	10
What pension'd slave of Attila, Leads in the rear ?	
Come they from Scythian wilds afar, Our blood to spill ?	
Wear they the livery of the Czar ? They do his will.	15
Nor tassell'd silk, nor epaulette, Nor plume, nor torse—	
No splendor gilds, all sternly met, Our foot and horse.	20
But, dark and still, we inly glow, Condens'd in ire !	
Strike, tawdry slaves, and ye shall know Our gloom is fire.	
In vain your pomp, ye evil powers, Insults the land ;	25
Wrongs, vengeance, and <i>the cause</i> are ours, And God's right hand !	
Madmen ! they trample into snakes The wormy clod !	30
Like fire beneath their feet awakes The sword of God !	
Behind, before, above, below, They rouse the brave ;	
Where'er they go, they make a foe, Or find a grave.	35

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

BORN 1784, died 1842. A hard-working miscellaneous writer, author, among other things, of the "Lives of the British Painters," and the well-known song, *A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea*. When R. H. Cromek was travelling through Scotland in 1809, to collect old songs, Cunningham palmed off his old works on him as such. The piece here given is given for the sake of the refrain, which seems really ancient.

HAME, HAME, HAME.

HAME, hame, hame, hame fain wad I be,
O, hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie !

When the flower is i' the bud, and the leaf is on the tree,
The larks shall sing me hame in my ain countrie.
Hame, hame, hame, hame fain wad I be, 5
O, hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie !

The green leaf o' loyaltie's begun for to fa',
The bonnie white rose it is withering an' a' ;
But I'll water't wi' the blude of usurping tyrannie,
An' green it will grow in my ain countrie. 10

O, there's naught frae ruin my country can save
But the keys o' kind heaven to open the grave :
That a' the noble martyrs wha died for loyaltie,
May rise again and fight for their ain countrie.

The great are now gane, a' wha ventured to save, 15
The new grass is springing on the tap o' their graves ;
But the sun thro' the mirk blinks blythe in my e'e,
"I'll shine on ye yet in yere ain countrie."

Hame, hame, hame, hame fain wad I be,
Hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie ! 20

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON.

GEORGE GORDON NOEL, sixth Lord Byron, was born in 1788, son of a father known as the "wicked Earl," from whom he inherited some of his "wickedness." He was, for some years, on account of his least valuable writings, the idol of his countrymen; afterwards, because of a divorce, their execration. Leaving England in 1816 he spent the rest of his life on the Continent, in dissipation such as the Philistine deems the appanage of talent, the burgess, becoming in a lord. During this time he produced much work, good and bad inextricably mixed. Rousing himself at last to nobler life and, like Shelley, thinking that there was more important work in the world than poetry waiting to be done, he passed to Greece to help its people in their struggle for liberty; only to die of fever at Mesolonghi, in his thirty-seventh year.

Byron's place in English literature is still under debate. For many years he was considered one of the greatest of our poets: and alone among the writers of his time, he became for Continental readers the type of modern English poetry—one reason for which certainly was that the extreme lack of finish in his verse allowed all that was good in it to pass easily into a foreign

medium. The French Romanticists of 1830 held him—as certain English critics still do—to be the mouthpiece of passion: and if passion necessarily means lawlessness and reckless revolt, this may be conceded them. In the matter of “passion,” Byron was the scandal, the rake of a kingdom, as Burns was of a parish—but he did not possess Burns’ lyrical gift.

Byron was not a poet of imagination in the high sense of the word, as Keats, Wordsworth, and Shelley were. There is indeed much imaginative splendour in the later cantos of *Childe Harold*, but it is of the historical and antiquarian order. The verse-romances which brought him fame—*The Giaour*, *The Corsair*, and others; and to a certain extent *Childe Harold*—introduce us, over and over again, to an attitudinizing “melancholy” hero, “interestingly” pale, the darling of sentimental misses; a man of “one virtue and a thousand crimes,” with dark treasures of remorse in his bosom; a Timon, a misanthrope, with no friend but his dog. The same meets us in Byron’s wretched dramas—*Cain* may be excepted from this condemnation—one of which, *Manfred*, somewhat elevates the type, but leaves the reasons for his remorse more obscure than ever. There is no originality in this; only vulgarization of a certain mood of French Romanticism, the “malady of the century,” the incapability to live. Byron may have simply caught the disease from the atmosphere of his time, or he may have gone to centres of infection—Rousseau the sentimental, Chateaubriand the theatrical.¹

Byron shared with the writers of his day a general

¹The “mystery-novels” of Anne Radcliffe have also been suggested as a source.

enthusiasm for liberty. The best result in his case was his Grecian expedition. His lasting work as a poet was done in satire and humour. As no examples of it are given here, and as it has not the least affinity with the selection from his poetry offered to students of this book, there is no necessity to dwell upon it.

The case of Byron is still under judgment. The remarks here made on his work are made by one who, not setting up to be the judge, desires to avoid "contempt of court."

THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS.

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like thee ;
 And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me :
 When, as if its sound were causing
 The charmed ocean's pausing,
 The waves lie still and gleaming,
 And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep, 10
 Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's asleep :
 So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee,
 With a full but soft emotion, 15
 Like the swell of summer's ocean.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THE private life of poets does not concern us here, and it will be enough to state that Shelley was born in Sussex in 1792, and drowned near Leghorn in 1822, having spent nearly all his life, from 1816 onwards, in Switzerland and Italy. His opinions caused him to be held in execration by the English public: he was expelled from Oxford for a boyish pamphlet on the *Necessity of Atheism*, and the Lord Chancellor refused him the custody of his own children. His publications during his life-time amounted to thirty-four, a large number of them being prose-pamphlets on atheism, deism, vegetarianism, the rights of man, and kindred themes. It may be said that before his twenty-first publication, *Alastor*, in 1816, he had written nothing deserving of note, and much that was of no value. From *Alastor* onwards we find him producing in rapid succession masterpieces of poetry; but it appears, from his own words, that, had he lived longer, he would have abandoned poetry for what he considered "more serious," namely philosophy, with reference to social reform, and humanitarian propaganda. Perhaps, then, it was by "love of the gods" that he died in his youth. But what he did accomplish is among the glories of English verse.

The spirit of Shelley's verse is a keen sense of the perfect beauty, and a sense no less keen of its absence from this life. The misery of the world is indeed just the lack of the ideal beauty or of some satisfying measure of its manifestation. Hence his ardour of desire for a regenerated world, for a "happy Earth, reality of Heaven," a new Eden where the feeling of brotherhood would form of all men the one Man,

a chain of linked thought
Of love and might to be divided not,
Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,
Whose nature is its own divine control,

—the vision of which descended upon him when he wrote the fourth act of the *Prometheus Unbound*. But at most periods he is oppressed by the ugliness of life and his poetry becomes an aspiration to the ideal beauty, now conceived as remote and

visiting

The various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds,

or again, as manifesting itself darkly in this groping and striving universe, a thought taken from Plato (whose *Banquet* Shelley translated) for *Adonais*. Some have thought to do Shelley honour by calling him pantheist, on the strength of this same Platonic dream, but Shelley's spirit maintained the freedom of the poet, and was far from putting on the shackles of system; least of all would he have granted that the *Quarterly* reviewer was, equally with himself and Keats, a manifestation of the divinity.

Keats and Shelley have often been spoken of as kindred spirits, perhaps because they both died young,

and because of *Adonais*. Kindred they are, as all great poets are, in this, that they both had a deep insight into the Supreme Beauty. But in the attitude they adopt towards that beauty, and then towards life, they are profoundly different. Keats, having looked into the eternal, can return and trace it through all its manifestations in the simplest natural fact and in the conceptions of past ages. Shelley seems to be blinded by gazing on the sun, and can no longer feel at home in this imperfect world. Henceforward he is driven between the extremes: at one moment cursing kings, religions, and life, at another lost in ecstasy over thoughts of the world to be. Keats can vie with him in visionary landscape: but Shelley does not return as often as Keats to "the simple flowers of our spring," the common country-side.¹

The attitude of Keats I should call the more profoundly, more centrally human, and the more philosophical and realistic. The vulgar is right, by its large instinct, in understanding the word philosopher of one who can smile at fate and be half in love with sorrow: since not to find one's place in the world and life, which one after all must endure, is to fail. A lack of common humanity, a certain unreality, was at once Shelley's strength and his weakness. His strength, since it gave him to sing an elfin music, only to be described by the well-worn adjective "ethereal," to fashion an impalpable beauty out of starlight, moonlight, clouds, rainbows, and dew. His weakness, for just as it can be well said that his music lacks the under vibration, the sense of depths which Shakespeare and Wordsworth communicate

¹ See Keats' verses entitled *Teignmouth*.

to us, so his iridescent lyric visions do not always convince. We are left, after many of his poems, with the feeling that we have awakened from an intangible, vanishing dream, not that we have gained a permanent revelation concerning ourselves and life. And it is important to notice that Shelley himself experienced a similar revulsion after writing one of his most beautiful poems, *Epipsychidion*. Here he abandons himself to an ecstasy of ideal passion for a beautiful woman who was not his wife. With great keenness and passion Shelley inveighs against the narrowness of

The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,
The life that wears, the spirit that creates,
One object and one form, and builds thereby
A sepulchre for its eternity.

and makes a plea for a wider love, that universal love that should redeem mankind. Yet his keenness is sophistical, his passion unjustified. Here, as elsewhere, when dealing with religions and systems, he makes of the imperfection of a custom, of the accidental failings of those who practise it, a radical sin of the custom itself, without perceiving its deep human logic. No man can love all humanity—that is, only an ideal fiction—and be tolerable. He would be so deprived of loving weakness in favour of individuals, that humanity, successively represented by all individuals he should meet, would cast him out. It is only by a narrow gratuitous love that we, essentially narrow and finite human beings, can gain any notion of love. Shelley lacked that basis of irrational nature out of which the spirit must draw sap if it is to possess sweetness, and this lack almost justifies Patmore's charge that he

had no true love and no true wisdom. He was thus unbalanced—a fact which has proved his genius to many whom his poetry could not convince, and was driven from one extreme to another in turn :

Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind
Than calm in waters seen.

So he afterwards said "The *Epipsychidion* I cannot look at; the person whom it celebrates was a cloud instead of a Juno; and poor Ixion starts from the monster that was the offspring of his own passion." And this was no rare experience with him. The instability of his mind is again shown in his continual wailing over the sufferings of his life. One does not pretend that a poet's life, or any man's life, is all joy; but Shelley insists too little on the joy, and leaves the iterated misery so unexplained, that one cannot help arguing, not altogether prosaically, that the possession of genius cannot be an undiluted evil, that a loving and intellectual wife, the intercourse with people of high culture and talent, the sight of Italian scenery and antiquity must naturally compensate one for the evils of Church and State, and the immemorial Philistinism of the British Public. Again, and this may be bound up with that disease of Shelley's nerves which led him to see visions, there is a certain hysterical exaggeration in the expression of his feelings. I should not like to count the number of shrieks in his poetry; it is astonishing that one of them occurs upon a glimpse of the intellectual beauty. He lacks composure also: being, like all passionate lovers of humanity, bound to hate a considerable portion of it (as now constituted),

he can set no measure to his detestation. The result on his verse is bad. A certain measure of the virtue known as "holy indifference" is required for fine beauty; just as the spectator of a tragedy is not asked to suffer.

When all these exceptions have been taken, it remains none the less that Shelley is a poet of first rank, and that, in addition, he represents a poetic character unique in English literature. We all have our hours of profound discontent, and of such hours Shelley is the voice. Don Quixote harmed himself among the windmills, yet none may mock at him. And all that is generous in us must go out to the poet who refused to compromise with evil and ugliness, who heroically rejected all but beauty and perfection.

Shelley's genius, being purely lyrical, was often a law unto itself. Edgar Poe has said of him, with some justice: "His rhapsodies are but the rough notes—the stenographic memoranda of poems—memoranda which, because they were all sufficient for his own intelligence, he cared not to be at the trouble of transcribing in full for mankind. . . . What seems in him the diffuseness of one idea, is the concision of many." A great part of Shelley's poetry exists in a fragmentary shape, being in truth the jottings of unexecuted ideas: Poe's criticism is supported by the looseness of construction, the tendency to let the imagination wander off to irrelevant beauties, generally perceptible in Shelley's work. This is a natural and ever-ready temptation to the romantic poet. In one instance it happened to Shelley that, having completed a drama in three acts, he yet, some months later, added to it a

fourth. Speaking in the abstract, it can only be said that a drama which can be thus lengthened is an absurdity, since a drama ends when an action is completed. But, in this instance the dramatic form was a pure accident, and the added act a further glory; for the drama was *Prometheus Unbound*, where Shelley has used the story as a mere pretext for splendour of lyrism. It is not the right courtesy towards the dramatic form, but genius and the consummate achievement of the poem absolve the author.

I.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND.

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes : O, thou, 5
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
 The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until
 Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow
 Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill 10
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
 With living hues and odours plain and hill :
 Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere ;
 Destroyer and preserver ; Hear, oh, hear !

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion, 15
 Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
 Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,
 Angels of rain and lightning : there are spread
 On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
 Like the bright hair uplifted from the head 20
 Of some fierce Maenad, ev'n from the dim verge
 Of the horizon to the zenith's height
 The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
 Of the dying year, to which this closing night
 Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre, 25
 Vaulted with all thy congregated might
 Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
 Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst : Oh hear !

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
 The blue Mediterranean, where he lay, 30
 Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,
 Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,
 And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
 Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
 All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers 35
 So sweet, the sense faints picturing them ! Thou
 For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
 Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
 The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
 The sapless foliage of the ocean, know 40
 Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear
 And tremble and despoil themselves : O hear !

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear ;
 If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee ;
 A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share 45
 The impulse of thy strength, only less free
 Than thou, O uncontrollable ! If even
 I were as in my boyhood, and could be
 The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
 As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed 50
 Scarce seem'd a vision ; I would ne'er have striven
 As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
 Oh ! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud !
 I fall upon the thorns of life ! I bleed !
 A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd 55
 One too like thee : tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is :
 What if my leaves are falling like its own !
 The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
 Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone, 60
 Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
 My spirit ! be thou me, impetuous one !

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe	
Like wither'd leaves to quicken a new birth ;	
And, by the incantation of this verse,	65
Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth	
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind !	
Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth	
The trumpet of a prophecy ! O, wind,	
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind ?	70

II.

TO NIGHT.

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,	
Spirit of Night !	
Out of the misty eastern cave,	
Where, all the long and lone daylight,	
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,	5
Which make thee terrible and dear,—	
Swift be thy flight !	
Wrap thy form in a mantle grey	
Star-inwrought !	
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day,	10
Kiss her until she be wearied out,	
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,	
Touching all with thine opiate wand—	
Come, long-sought !	
When I arose and saw the dawn,	15
I sigh'd for thee ;	
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,	
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,	
And the weary Day turn'd to his rest	
Lingering like an unloved guest,	20
I sigh'd for thee.	

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
 Wouldst thou me ?
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
 Murmur'd like a noon-tide bee, 25
 Shall I nestle near thy side ?
 Wouldst thou me ?—And I replied,
 No, not thee !

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon— 30
 Sleep will come when thou art fled ;
 Of neither would I ask the boon
 I ask of thee, beloved Night—
 Swift be thine approaching flight,
 Come soon, soon ! 35

III.

TO ——— .

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
 Vibrates in the memory—
 Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
 Live within the sense they quicken.
 Rose-leaves, when the rose is dead, 5
 Are heap'd for the beloved's bed ;
 And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
 Love itself shall slumber on.

IV.

SONG.

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,
 Spirit of Delight !
 Wherefore hast thou left me now
 Many a day and night ?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.	81
Many a weary night and day 'Tis since thou art fled away.	5
How shall ever one like me Win thee back again ? With the joyous and the free Thou wilt scoff at pain. Spirit false ! thou hast forgot All but those who need thee not.	10
As a lizard with the shade Of a trembling leaf, Thou with sorrow art dismay'd ; Even the sighs of grief Reproach thee, that thou art not near, And reproach thou wilt not hear.	15
Let me set my mournful ditty To a merry measure, Thou wilt never come for pity, Thou wilt come for pleasure, Pity then will cut away Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.	20
I love all that thou lovest, Spirit of Delight ! The fresh Earth in new leaves drest, And the starry night ; Autumn evening, and the morn When the golden mists are born.	25 30
I love snow, and all the forms Of the radiant frost ; I love waves, and winds, and storms, Every thing almost Which is Nature's, and may be Untainted by man's misery.	35

I love tranquil solitude,
 And such society
 As is quiet, wise, and good ;
 Between thee and me 40
 What difference ? but thou dost possess
 The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,
 And like light can flee,
 But, above all other things 45
 Spirit, I love thee—
 Thou art love and life ! O come,
 Make once more my heart thy home.

V.

A LAMENT.

O WORLD ! O life ! O time !
 On whose last steps I climb,
 Trembling at that where I had stood before ;
 When will return the glory of your prime ?
 No more—O, never more ! 5

Out of the day and night
 A joy has taken flight ;
 Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar
 Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
 No more—O, never more ! 10

VI.

A SONG.

A widow bird sate mourning for her love
 Upon a wintry bough ;
 The frozen wind crept on above,
 The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare, 5
 No flower upon the ground,
 And little motion in the air
 Except the mill-wheel's sound.

VII.

FROM ADONAI.

PEACE, peace ! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
 He hath awakened from the dream of life—
 'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
 With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
 And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife 5
 Invulnerable nothings.— *We* decay
 Like corpses in a charnel ; fear and grief
 Convulse us and consume us day by day,
 And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night ; 10
 Envy and calumny, and hate and pain,
 And that unrest which men miscall delight,
 Can touch him not and torture not again ;
 From the contagion of the world's slow stain
 He is secure, and now can never mourn 15
 A heart grown cold, a head grown grey, in vain—
 Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
 With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he ;
 Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn, 20
 Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
 The spirit thou lamentest is not gone ;
 Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan !
 Cease ye faint flowers and fountains, and, thou Air,
 Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown 25

O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair !

He is made one with Nature : there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird ; 30
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own ;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love, 35
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely : he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress 39
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear ;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear ;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light. 45

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not ;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought 50
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there,
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown 55
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not

Yet faded from him ; Sidney, as he fought
 And as he fell and as he lived and loved 60
 Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
 Arose ; and Lucan, by his death approved :
 Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

And many more, whose names on earth are dark,
 But whose transmitted effluence cannot die 65
 So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
 Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
 "Thou art become as one of us," they cry ;
 It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
 Swung blind in unascended majesty, 70
 Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song,
 Assume thy wingéd throne, thou Vesper of our throng !"

Who mourns for Adonais ? Oh come forth
 Fond wretch ! and know thyself and him aright.
 Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth ; 75
 As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
 Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
 Sate the void circumference : then shrink
 Even to a point within our day and night ;
 And keep thy heart light, lest it make thee sink, 80
 When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
 Oh ! not of him, but of our joy : 'tis naught
 That ages, empires, and religions there
 Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought ; 85
 For such as he can lend,—they borrow not
 Glory from those who made the world their prey ;
 And he is gathered to the kings of thought
 Who waged contention with their time's decay,
 And of the past are all that cannot pass away. 90

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
 The grave, the city, and the wilderness ;
 And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
 And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress
 The bones of Desolation's nakedness 95
 Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
 Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
 Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
 A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time 100
 Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand ;
 And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
 Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
 This refuge for his memory, doth stand
 Like flame transformed to marble ; and beneath 105
 A field is spread, on which a newer band
 Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,
 Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

Here pause : these graves are all too young as yet
 To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned 110
 Its charge to each ; and if the seal is set
 Here on one fountain of a mourning mind,
 Break it not thou ! too surely shalt thou find
 Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
 Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind 115
 Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
 What Adonais is why fear we to become ?

The One remains, the many change and pass ;
 Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly ;
 Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass, 120.
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
 Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,

If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek !
Follow where all is fled !—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words are weak 125
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart ?
Thy hopes are gone before : from all things here
They have departed ; thou shouldst now depart !
A light is passed from the revolving year, 130
And man, and woman ; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near ;
'Tis Adonais calls ! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together. 135

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love 140
Which, through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst ; now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song 145
Descends on me ; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given ;
The massy earth and sphered skies are riven !
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar ! 150
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

JOHN KEATS.

THERE is nothing to tell of the life of Keats, dead of consumption in 1821 at the age of 25, save that, having been intended for the surgeon's profession, he devoted himself to poetry with a whole-heartedness of passion unparalleled, for instance, either in Byron or Shelley. His *Poems*, published in 1817, *Endymion* 1818, met with such savage attack on the part of the *Quarterly Review* and *Blackwood's Magazine*—owing to some mistaken belief that Keats shared the Radical ideas of certain of his literary acquaintances—that a myth grew up around him, according to which his death should have been directly caused by the *Quarterly* article. Certainly, each volume presented faults, the former an abundance thereof. Not only could Keats write such lines as these,

Of him whose name to ev'ry heart's a solace,
High-minded and unbending William Wallace,
While to the rugged north our musing turns
We well might drop a tear for him and Burns ;

but he exhibits, with frequency, a weakness peculiar to the Romantic imagination—of which he had, in the poem *Sleep and Poetry*, declared himself an ardent devotee—namely, its lack of controlling intellect, its loss of composure under stress of emotion or sensation, a weakness

prohibiting all dignity of style: since style, as we find it in Milton, the noble expression of a noble individuality, always equal to its experiences, can only spring from high composure. Thus Keats often manifests, over the simplest sensations, an eager fussiness, an amiable and restless garrulity, as of one who has come into the country for the first time in his life and is perpetually crying, "Oh, I say! *do* come and look at this flower." This habit of "luxuriating" ("gushing" we should now call it), Keats had caught from Leigh Hunt, whose misfortune it was, says Mr. Colvin, "to carry the fire-side manner into literature, and to affect both in prose and verse, but much more in the latter, an air of chatty familiarity and ease which passes too easily into Cockney pertness." But Keats was soon to shake it off, and in *Endymion*, despite bad arrangement and grave sins of detail, his native strength is manifest.

The last volume he published, in 1820, contains his actual achievement in high poetry: *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *The Eve of S. Agnes*, *Hyperion*, and the great Odes. It is idle to say of any man that, had he lived longer, he would have done this or that; yet, when one contemplates the powers of Keats and the rapidity with which they passed to their actual height, one cannot but assent to the judgment of Tennyson, and many another poet, that in Keats the most glorious possibility was lost to English poetry. Let us look at the grounds for this opinion.

One quality is universally conceded to him—the vivid perception of sensuous beauty and the power of what can only be termed "magical" expression. Keats' delight in natural beauty for its own sake, as opposed to Wordsworth's "reading of earth" in accordance with his

ethical preconceptions, or Shelley's pantheistic ardour, a delight in simple natural beauty which was bound to lead him far towards comprehension of the significance of beauty—this, and his detailed perfection of execution, at his best, his practice of "filling every rift with ore," as he phrased it, were among the generating conditions of much that is finest in Tennyson's work, and of that later Romantic revival under the leadership of Rossetti, which was known as Pre-Raphaelitism. As an influence, Keats dominates the century.

There is no need to dwell on this aspect of Keats' work: not a writer but has done it justice. It is more important to insist upon the fact, which, as far as I know, Mrs. Meynell alone has directly asserted, that Keats was, or at least was to be, a great intellectual poet. His whole work appears to me informed, even from the beginning, with reflection on the nature of poetry, the nature of Beauty and its relations to the soul. In one of his letters he speaks of his absorption in "the mighty abstract idea of Beauty in all things": observe abstract *idea*, no more "luxuriating" in trifles. The student who will here refer to what is said in the introduction concerning the evidence afforded by poetry of the coherence of the beautiful aspect of things, and the unity of all relations of beauty from mere sensation to spirit, will understand what was meant in the foregoing paragraph by the statement that Keats' disinterested absorption in pure natural beauty was bound to carry him farther towards comprehension of the significance of Beauty, of the beautiful universe, the poet's only true subject, than any ethical pre-occupation. And remembering what was written concerning myths,

he will understand why such passages are chosen from Keats as treat mythical themes. With what certainty, for instance, in the short passage chosen from the poem with which his first volume opens, does he pierce through the beautiful tale of Narcissus to the natural fact behind it; with what certainty does he grasp the essentials of the legend of Pan.

And now, *Endymion*.¹ When all has been said concerning the wilful disorder, the tangled undergrowth of this poem, it remains none the less an essential expression of the nature of the poetic genius, as it may develop in any human spirit, even in one to whom the faculty of poetic expression has not been given—for poetry is not merely an art, but the soul of every great passion. This Carian shepherd, Endymion, whom the moon-goddess, enamoured, visits stealthily, coming and going mysteriously, was for Keats a type of any man into whose life there has come a high imaginative ideal, a glimpse of the abstract beauty, casting upon it a strange and disturbing light, like that of the moon, a type of the soul's striving for beauty, of Keats' own poetic search. Intoxicated with his own power to read the creations of forgotten ages, Keats has thrown pell-mell into the poem, according to chance of the story, myths of the most disparate character. But mark the significance of the wanderings of Endymion: how, in search of the vision, he must leave "habitual self," the life of inglorious days, and explore the depths of his own soul, typified by "the silent mysteries of earth," caverns lit by "a faint eternal even-tide of gems," the dimly divined intuitions of the

¹ I have not been able to consult Mrs. Owen's study of Keats, wherein the allegoric purpose of *Endymion* was first stated.

spirit; how he goes through the last agony of doubt in
 "the Cave of Quietude,"

a den,
 Beyond the seeming confines of the space,
 Made for the soul to wander in, and trace
 Its own existence, of remotest glooms.

Observe, too, that not all the minor myths are out of harmony with the central one; that, in the tale of Glaucus and Scylla, the task imposed on the wretched lover, if he would again find his beloved, is to scan utterly

All the depths of magic, and expound
 The meaning of all motions, shapes and sounds ;

to explore

all forms and substances,
 Straight homeward to their symbol-essences,

their spiritual significations—the poet's task, as Keats conceived. Then in *Hyperion*, as the speech of Oceanus here quoted therefrom, most plainly shows, Keats symbolizes the drama of the myths; an old order of gods yields to a younger, by reason of the beauty which the younger possesses,

for 'tis the eternal law
 That first in beauty should be first in might :

myth yields to myth, the "mighty abstract idea of Beauty" leading the human spirit from each conception to a higher. Even the lines at the close of the *Ode on a Grecian Urn*,

Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know,

so often chosen by hasty critics as a proof of Keats' lack of intellect and "glorious soullessness," are but an instinctive assertion of the intuition that spiritual perfection, the real truth, unlike the dusty truth that is registered by measuring rods, reveals itself as something primarily beautiful, delivered from all painful chains of proof, requiring no evidence beyond its own loveliness; and that our right means of reaching it is not logic but imagination, a trust in simple beauty, since all beauty, material or spiritual, is akin.

Such was the intellectual course traversed by Keats before his twenty-sixth year, such his handling of the myths. He chose those most accessible to him, the Greek, in which beauty is the predominating element. He handled them with consummate power, not "because he was Greek," as Shelley said (a statement to which it is difficult to attribute any apt meaning), but because he was able to read in them the unconscious poetic thought of their anonymous creators. His thought and his imagination, his poetry and his philosophy, were co-extensive one with another. But lest he should become the philosopher-poet, the singer in full possession of his singing-power, the thinker fully conscious of the purpose of song, and thereby become something more than man, a living symbol of truth, he died young, like those whom the gods were said to love.

Keats became a poet through reading Spenser, and his style was successively influenced by that of the poets whom he studied. In fact, he had hardly developed a personal style before his death. Such personal style need not be, and in his case might

never have been, original; his imaginative power would probably have created it out of elements pre-existing in former writers. Yet the best of his sonnets, certain passages of *Lamia*, *Isabella*, and *The Eve of St. Agnes*, and some of the odes indicate it: the *Ode to a Nightingale*, particularly, is a specimen of the richly-coloured, heavily-perfumed, suggestive manner of expression which is most intimately connected with the name of Keats.

I.

NARCISSUS.

WHAT first inspired a bard of old to sing
Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring?
In some delicious ramble, he had found
A little space, with boughs all woven round ;
And in the midst of all, a clearer pool 5
Than e'er reflected in its pleasant cool
The blue-sky, here and there serenely peeping
Through tendril wreaths fantastically creeping.
And on the bank a lonely flower he spied,
A meek and forlorn flower, with naught of pride, 10
Drooping its beauty o'er the watery clearness,
To woo its own sad image into nearness :
Deaf to light Zephyrus, it would not move ;
But still would seem to droop, to pine, to love.
So, while the Poet stood in this sweet spot, 15
Some fainter gleamings o'er his fancy shot ;
Nor was it long ere he had told the tale
Of young Narcissus, and sad Echo's bale.

II.

HYMN TO PAN.

" O THOU whose mighty palace roof doth hang
From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death
Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness ;
Who lovest to see the Hamadryads dress 5
Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels darken ;
And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and hearken

The dreary melody of bedded reeds—
 In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds
 The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth, 10
 Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth
 Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou now,
 By thy love's milky brow,
 By all the trembling mazes that she ran,
 Hear us, great Pan ! 15

“ O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet turtles
 Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles,
 What time thou wanderest at eventide
 Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the side
 Of thine enmosséd realms : O thou, to whom 20
 Broad-leavéd fig-trees even now foredoom
 Their ripened fruitage ; yellow-girted bees
 Their golden honeycombs ; our village leas
 Their fairest blossomed beans and poppiéd corn ;
 The chuckling linnet its five young unborn, 25
 To sing for thee ; low-creeping strawberries
 Their summer coolness ; pent-up butterflies
 Their freckled wings ; yea, the fresh-budding year
 All its completions—be quickly near,
 By every wind that nods the mountain pine, 30
 O forester divine !

“ Thou, to whom every Faun and Satyr flies
 For willing service ; whether to surprise
 The squatted hare while in half-sleeping fit ;
 Or upward ragged precipices flit 35
 To save poor lambkins from the eagle's maw ;
 Or by mysterious enticement draw
 Bewildered shepherds to their path again ;
 Or to tread breathless round the frothy main,
 And gather up all fancifullest shells 40
 For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,

And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping ;
 Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,
 The while they pelt each other on the crown
 With silvery oak-apples, and fir-cones brown— 45
 By all the echoes that about thee ring,
 Hear us, O Satyr king !

“O Harkener to the loud-clapping shears,
 While ever and anon to his shorn peers
 A ram goes bleating : Winder of the Horn, 50
 When snouted wild-boars routing tender corn
 Anger our huntsmen : Breather round our farms,
 To keep off mildews, and all weather harms :
 Strange Ministrant of undescribéd sounds
 That come a-swooning over hollow grounds, 55
 And wither drearily on barren moors :
 Dread opener of the mysterious doors
 Leading to universal knowledge—see,
 Great Son of Dryope,
 The many that are come to pay their vows 60
 With leaves about their brows !

“Be still the unimaginable lodge
 For solitary thinkings ; such as dodge
 Conception to the very bourne of heaven,
 Then leave the naked brain : be still the leaven, 65
 That, spreading in this dull and clodded earth,
 Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth :
 Be still a symbol of immensity ;
 A firmament reflected in a sea ;
 An element filling the space between ; 70
 An unknown—but no more : we humbly screen
 With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bending,
 And giving out a shout most heaven-rending,
 Conjure thee to receive our humble Paean
 Upon thy Mount Lycean !” 75

III.

TO A NIGHTINGALE.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, 5
 But being too happy in thy happiness,—
 That thou, light-wingéd Dryad of the trees,
 In some melodious plot
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease. 10

O for a draught of vintage, that hath been
 Cooled a long age in the deep-delvéd earth,
 Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !
 O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stainéd mouth ;
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
 And with thee fade into the forest dim : 20

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs, 25
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs ;
 Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. 30

Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :
 Already with thee ! tender is the night, 35
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Clustered around by all her starry Fays ;
 But here there is no light,
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet, 41
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ; 45
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;
 Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves ;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves. 50

Darkling I listen ; and, for many a time,
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Called him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath ;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy !
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
 To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !
 No hungry generations tread thee down ;

The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown :
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path 65
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self !
 Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf. 75
 Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades :
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?
 Fled is that music :—Do I wake or sleep ? 80

IV.

VOICES OF THE GODS.

(FROM "HYPERION.")

1.

As when upon a tranced summer night,
 Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,
 Tall oaks, branch-charméd by the earnest stars,
 Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,
 Save from one gradual solitary gust 5
 Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,
 As if the ebbing air had but one wave :
 So came these words and went.

2.

There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines
 When Winter lifts his voice ; there is a noise 10
 Among immortals when a God gives sign,
 With hushing finger, how he means to load
 His tongue with the full weight of utterless thought,
 With thunder, and with music, and with pomp :
 Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines ; 15
 Which, when it ceases in this mountained world,
 No other sound succeeds ; but ceasing here,
 Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom
 Grew up like organ, that begins anew
 Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt short, 20
 Leave the din'd air vibrating silverly.

3.

So ended Saturn ; and the God of the Sea,
 Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,
 But cogitation in his watery shades,
 Arose, with locks not oozy, and began, 25
 In murmurs, which his first-endeavouring tongue
 Caught infant-like from the far-foam'd sands :
 " O ye, whom wrath consumes ! who, passion-stung,
 Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies !
 Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears, 30
 My voice is not a bellows unto ire.
 Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring proof
 How ye, perforce, must be content to stoop :
 And in the proof much comfort will I give,
 If ye will take that comfort in its truth. 35
 We fall by course of Nature's law, not force
 Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn, thou
 Hast sifted well the atom-universe ;
 But for this reason, that thou art the King,
 And only blind from sheer supremacy, 40

One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,
 Through which I wandered to eternal truth.
 And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,
 So art thou not the last ; it cannot be.
 Thou art not the beginning nor the end. 45
 From chaos and parental darkness came
 Light, the first fruits of that intestine broil,
 That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends
 Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour came,
 And with it light, and light engendering 50
 Upon its own producer, forthwith touched
 The whole enormous matter into life.
 Upon that very hour, our parentage,
 The Heavens and the Earth were manifest :
 Then thou, first-born, and we the giant-race, 55
 Found ourselves ruling new and beauteous realms.
 Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain ;
 O folly ! for to bear all naked truths
 And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
 That is the top of sovereignty. Mark well ! 60
 As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far
 Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chiefs ;
 And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth
 In form and shape compact and beautiful,
 In will, in action free, companionship, 65
 And thousand other signs of purer life ;
 So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
 A power more strong in beauty, born of us
 And fated to excel us, as we pass
 In glory that old Darkness : nor are we 70
 Thereby more conquered, than by us the rule
 Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull soil
 Quarrel with the proud forests it hath fed,
 And feedeth still, more comely than itself ?
 Can it deny the chiefdom of green groves ? 75
 Or shall the tree be envious of the dove

Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings
 To wander wherewithal and find its joys?
 We are such forest-trees, and our fair boughs
 Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves 80
 But eagles golden-feathered, who do tower
 Above us in their beauty, and must reign
 In right thereof; for 'tis the eternal law
 That first in beauty should be first in might:
 Yea, by that law, another race may drive 85
 Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.
 Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,
 My dispossessor? Have ye seen his face?
 Have ye beheld his chariot, foamed along
 By noble wingéd creatures he hath made? 90
 I saw him on the calméd waters scud,
 With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,
 That it enforced me to bid sad farewell
 To all my empire: farewell sad I took,
 And hither came, to see how dolorous fate 95
 Had wrought upon ye; and how I might best
 Give consolation in this woe extreme.
 Receive the truth, and let it be your balm."

4.

So far her voice flowed on, like timorous brook,
 That, lingering along a pebbled coast, 100
 Doth fear to meet the sea: but sea it met,
 And shuddered; for the overwhelming voice
 Of huge Enceladus swallowed it in wrath:
 The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves
 In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks, 105
 Came booming thus, while still upon his arm
 He leaned; not rising, from supreme contempt.

V.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCY.

- "O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.
- "O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, 5
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.
- "I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever-dew, 10
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too."
- "I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light, 15
And her eyes were wild.
- "I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan. 20
- "I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.
- "She found me roots of relish sweet, 25
And honey wild and manna-dew,

And sure, in language strange, she said—
 ‘I love thee true!’

“She took me to her elfin grot,
 And there she wept and sigh’d full sore; 30
 And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
 With kisses four.

“And there she lull’d me asleep,
 And there I dream’d—ah! woe betide!
 The latest dream I ever dream’d 35
 On the cold hill’s side.

“I saw pale kings and princes too,
 Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
 They cried—‘*La belle Dame sans Mercy*
 Hath thee in thrall!’ 40

“I saw their starved lips in the gloam
 With horrid warning gap’d wide,
 And I awoke and found me here,
 On the cold hill’s side.

“And this is why I sojourn here 45
 Alone and palely loitering,
 Though the sedge is wither’d from the lake,
 And no birds sing.”

VI.

THE ODE TO MAIA.

Fragment.

MOTHER of Hermes! and still youthful Maia!
 May I sing to thee
 As thou wast hymn’d on the shores of Baiæ?
 Or may I woo thee

In earlier Sicilian ? Or thy smiles 5
 Seek as they once were sought, in Grecian isles,
 By bards who died content on pleasant sward,
 Leaving great verse unto a little clan ?
 O, give me their old vigour, and unheard
 Save of the quiet primrose, and the span 10
 Of heaven and few ears,
 Rounded by thee, my song should die away,
 Content as theirs,
 Rich in the simple worship of a day.

VIL

SONNETS.

1.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
 And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;
 Round many western islands have I been
 Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told 5
 That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne :
 Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
 Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold :

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
 When a new planet swims into his ken ; 10
 Or like stout Cortez, when, with eagle eyes
 He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
 Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

2.

ON THE ELGIN MARBLES.

My spirit is too weak ; mortality
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,
And each imagined pinnacle and steep
Of godlike hardship tells me I must die
Like a sick eagle looking at the sky. 5
Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep,
That I have not the cloudy winds to keep
Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.
Such dim-conceivéd glories of the brain
Bring round the heart an indescribable feud ; 10
So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,
That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude
Wasting of old Time—with a billowy main
A sun, a shadow of a magnitude.

EDGAR POE.

It would be rash to say, considering our ignorance of life and fate, that any man was born into a wrong time and place : yet the lover of Poe may permit himself to dream what might have been the poet's lot, had his age and country been more in accord with his spirit. And yet again, perhaps, a more favouring set of circumstances might have robbed him of that peculiar character of uniqueness which sets him altogether apart, not merely in American literature but in the literature of the world. Let us be content to look shortly at the facts of his unhappy life.

Of Celtic ancestry, of family long settled in the Southern States, Edgar Poe was born in Boston on January 19, 1809, of the union of a prodigal son, who had left an honourable and distinguished household for the stage, with an actress belonging to the strolling company which he had joined. The parents, both sickly, died early, after bequeathing an ill-balanced constitution to their son : the latter, aged scarcely three, was adopted by the rich family Allan, of Richmond, whose name is sometimes found added to his Christian name. There is no doubt that the child received from them an evil training. His beauty and precocity made him for them a kind of toy, something to be proud of, petted and spoiled : and he grew up in the fatal belief that he should inherit his foster-father's wealth. After many

schools, one of which, Dr. Bransby's, at Stoke Newington in England, was to remain in his memory and be immortalized in one of his most famous tales, he entered, in 1826, the University of Virginia, where he led the fast life of a rich man's son. Trouble followed, he fled from home, enlisted, published his first volume of verse, in 1829. Received back by Allan, he obtained an appointment as cadet in the military academy at West Point: he had previously published a second volume of verse. Military life he soon found uncongenial, and he secured his dismissal by deliberate neglect of duty. Mrs. Allan was now dead: her husband had married a young wife, and would have nothing more to do with Poe, who was thus thrown on the world, for which he was all unfit.

From this time on his history is one of wretchedness. He lived by his pen, wandering from town to town in America, with his devoted aunt, Mrs. Clemm, and her daughter Virginia whom he had married. In one place after another he found editorial and critical work on magazines, hackwork for publishers: in each case he gave abundant value for scanty reward. Always he fostered the idea of founding a truly literary magazine, which should advance letters in America and make him rich: never did he find the chance of realizing it. He was naturally unable to work under others of infinitely less powers than himself: it is not to be wondered at that his connection with them was seldom long. Collecting work published in various periodicals, he published in 1840 his *Tales of the Arabesque and Grotesque* (other editions, enlarged, 1845, 1849), *The Raven and other Poems* 1845, *Eureka*, a "prose-poem"

as the author termed it, on a curious philosophical theme, in 1848. After long suffering, illness and poverty, his wife died in 1846. The rest of Poe's life consists largely of extraordinarily complicated love-affairs with, and offers of marriage to, three women, showing a mind strangely out of touch with life. He died in the hospital at Baltimore on October 7, 1849, having been made drunk and drugged by certain politicians.

Poe's works were published after his death by his literary enemy, the Rev. Rufus Griswold, who used the opportunity for an attempt to defile Poe's memory in such fashion that the French poet, Baudelaire, translating Poe, asked whether there was no law in America preventing curs from entering the cemeteries. For years nought was heard in America but obloquy over his grave. The first efforts to do him justice came from France and England. Now that light has been made, America has adopted an attitude of cold and unsympathetic judicial severity towards the man and his work. The latter we shall briefly discuss later : as for his character, let us grant America that he drank, that he was often intoxicated, that he died of the effects of drink. Without asking America what it ever did for him, let us merely observe that this was Poe's only fault, seeing that in the fierce and hostile light thrown upon every nook of his existence no other has been discovered ; that but for this he would have been a knight without reproach ; that he was never an habitual drunkard but that his disorganized nerves succumbed to a small quantity of any liquor ; and that the many dense brains, that have resisted potations greater than his, were also impermeable by any idea or imagination like to his.

It is more interesting to inquire into the causes of American unfriendliness to the greatest American poet and man of letters. Poe, possessing a critical intellect of unique clearness and keenness, a reverence for all that was good in literature and a contempt for whatever was bad, was ever a thorn in the side of that self-complacent patriotism with which his countrymen regarded all the works of America. After shooting off many barbed and winged sayings against the pigmy brood of writers that surrounded him, he ended by pronouncing: "As a literary nation we are a vast perambulating humbug." The nation as a literary nation, the pigmies as individual vanities, were eager for revenge. His work offered few points of attack, his life many. It was attacked. Even Longfellow could not conceive that Poe could have charged him with plagiarism from other than "undefined" personal motives. Secondly, the centre of literary gravity in America seemed to self-righteous New England to lie in its own well-loved Boston: Poe was a Southerner and his attacks were doubly annoying.

The work of Poe falls under several heads, and in most of them he is distinctively original, sometimes an originative force. Of the tales, the humorous are of little value, or none; the detective stories are the first, and best, of an ever-increasing generation; the tales of scientific adventure fore-run Jules Verne. The tale of mystery Poe did not invent, but from his hands it received its perfect form and fuller significance. Like his contemporary Hawthorne, Poe was preoccupied with morbid states of the conscience and the will, and, like him, possessed the charm of atmosphere: but Poe's

atmosphere of dream-landscape, of decaying aristocracy, of occult and obsolete lore, is only his own. His finest tales are rather effects of tone, than tales; almost musical in character and development, they border on the territory of his verse.

As a critic, Poe has this especial value that he thought clearly, connectedly, and deeply on the art of verse. Certain ideas, which dominate much of the poetry produced since his death (and not merely in English-speaking lands, for Poe is a living literary force in the Latin countries), as that a short poem is preferable to a long one, since the latter with difficulty produces a single effect on the reader, that the drama had better be written in prose, that the didactic poem is not a poem,—were insisted on by him first. His contention that Beauty is the aim of poetry (as Keats had seen), and capable by itself of affecting the soul nobly and more fully than any anodyne mixture of art and preaching, offended the strenuous moralists of New England, who imagined, as moralists often will, that unless you carry morality in your button-hole on all occasions, you are necessarily immoral. The true morality of art was Poe's severe devotion to the aims and means of poetry. Let us not forget, in Poe's critical powers, the clairvoyance which led him, in 1847, to pronounce Tennyson "the noblest of poets."

Poe's own work in verse is small in extent, and its range is limited. Yet almost every piece (I speak of the score of good poems he left) is original, startlingly new in intention and execution, and none repeats another. The critical intelligence of the writer was of singular aid to him in composition. The late edition of

his works by Messrs. Stedman and Woodberry shows us how many of his masterpieces were patiently developed out of the formless productions of his youth when he seems to have belonged to that school, afterwards condemned by him, which exaggerated the faults of Shelley. Mr. Gosse speaks of his unrivalled "command of lyrical evolution," the faculty of developing a poem as a musician builds a symphonic movement out of a few themes. At times, it is true, he seems to juggle with this power and to verge on charlatanry, as in *Ulalume*, and more particularly in the notorious *Raven*, concerning which one is not seldom tempted to accept his own whimsical account of how it was written in cold blood. Yet attentive and impartial reading shows one that an original poetical conception has been indubitably communicated. And the charm of his verbal music has been a lure to more than one generation of English poets, from Tennyson himself down.

The matter of Poe's song is soon told. He divulged it in one of his early pieces, and it pervades the best of his prose work. To him, of all things in this world, Beauty alone really mattered, and to him was given a keen and special feeling of the death of Beauty in this world. He even went so far as to build a theory of poetry on it. The highest manifestations of Beauty fill us with melancholy, because Beauty passes and leaves us; therefore such melancholy is the true poetic emotion: and since, of all beautiful things, a beautiful, beloved woman lost, affects us with the most poignant sense of loss, let us choose such a death as our subject. It is enough that on this theme Poe wrote *The Raven*, *The Sleeper*, *Lenore*, *Annabel Lee*, *Ulalume*, *To One in Paradise*;

as on the death of a fair intelligence, *The Haunted Palace*. Sometimes death alone possesses him, its terror as in *The Conqueror Worm*, its peace as in *For Annie*, its majesty as in *The City in the Sea*. But Beauty and the death of Beauty are his peculiar theme.

For such a spirit there remains in this world, since Beauty dies, nothing worthy to occupy it. Absorbed in thought of that Beauty which does not die, which is always by itself, in itself, and with itself, like ever unto itself and immutable, it has scant respect and unbounded scorn for the temporal; especially when the temporal dreams of Progress, forgetting that, at its highest, the beautiful, it is but a broken reflection of the eternal and self-same Beauty: and more especially when that progress is proclaimed to consist in the passionate multiplication of wooden nutmegs and other fore-runners of the triumphant American civilization. Here again Poe came into conflict with his time: and, as a man, being an aristocrat and intellectual, he could not be brought to see that he was the equal of the (afterwards) Hon. Thomas Dunn English, who, as Poe sarcastically remarked, could not write his own name. But American scribblers might have left him in peace, remembering that the spirit of the outraged Republic had twice taken vengeance: once, when politicians intoxicated and drugged him, that he might vote at several booths on polling day, and then left him in the streets to die; and again, figuratively, when an indignant and patriotic locomotive leaped from its rails to shatter, in a tombstone-sculptor's yard, the monument intended for the unhappy poet's grave.

I.

TO ONE IN PARADISE.

THOU wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine :
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers, 5
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last !
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast !
A voice from out the Future cries, 10
"On ! on !" —but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf !) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast.

For, alas ! alas ! with me
The light of Life is o'er ! 15
No more—no more—no more—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar ! 20

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark¹ eye gleams,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances ! 25
By what eternal streams

¹*gray* in Messrs. Stedman and Woodberry's edition.

ULALUME.

Our talk had been serious and sober, 20
 But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
 Our memories were treacherous and sere,
 For we knew not the month was October,
 And we marked not the night of the year,
 (Ah, night of all nights in the year !)

25
 We noted not the dim lake of Auber
 (Though once we had journeyed down here),
 Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber
 Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent 30
And star-dials pointed to morn,
As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent 35
Arose with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's bediamonded crescent,
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian :
She rolls through an ether of sighs, 40
She revels in a region of sighs :
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies, 45
To the Lethean peace of the skies :
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes :
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes." 50

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust,
Her pallor I strangely mistrust :
Oh, hasten !—oh, let us not linger !
Oh, fly !—let us fly !—for we must." 55
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust ;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust. 60

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming ;
Let us on by this tremulous light !

Let us bathe in this crystalline light !
 Its sibyllic splendour is beaming
 With hope and in beauty to-night :— 65
 See, it flickers up the sky through the night !
 Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
 And be sure it will lead us aright :
 We safely may trust to a gleaming
 That cannot but guide us aright, 70
 Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche, and kissed her,
 And tempted her out of her gloom,
 And conquered her scruples and gloom ;
 And we passed to the end of the vista, 75
 But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
 By the door of a legended tomb ;
 And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
 On the door of this legended tomb ?"
 She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume— 80
 'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume !"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
 As the leaves that were crispéd and sere,
 As the leaves that were withering and sere,
 And I cried—"It was surely October, 85
 On this very night of last year
 That I journeyed—I journeyed down here,
 That I brought a dread burden down here :
 On this night of all nights in the year,
 Ah, what demon has tempted me here ? 90
 Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,
 This misty mid-region of Weir :
 Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
 This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

III.

FOR ANNIE.

THANK Heaven ! the crisis,
The danger, is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last,
And the fever called ' Living ' 5
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move,
As I lie at full length : 10
But no matter !—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly,
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder 15
Might fancy me dead,
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing 20
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart : ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing !

The sickness, the nausea, 25
The pitiless pain,
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain,

With the fever called 'Living'
That burned in my brain. 30

And oh ! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river 35
Of Passion accurst :
I have drank of a water
That quenches all thirst :

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound, 40
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground,
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah ! let it never 45
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy,
And narrow my bed ;
For a man never slept
In a different bed : 50
And, *to sleep*, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalised spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never 55
Regretting its roses :
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses ;

For now, while so quietly Lying, it fancies	60
A holier odour About it, of pansies : A rosemary odour, Commingled with pansies, With rue and the beautiful Puritan pansies.	65
And so it lies happily, Bathing in many A dream of the truth And the beauty of Annie, Drowned in a bath Of the tresses of Annie.	70
She tenderly kissed me, She fondly caressed, And then I fell gently To sleep on her breast, Deeply to sleep From the heaven of her breast.	75
When the light was extinguished, She covered me warm, And she prayed to the angels To keep me from harm, To the queen of the angels To shield me from harm.	80
And I lie so composedly, Now in my bed (Knowing her love) That you fancy me dead ; And I rest so contentedly, Now, in my bed,	85 90

(With her love at my breast)
 That you fancy me dead,
 That you shudder to look at me,
 Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter 95
 Than all of the many
 Stars in the sky,
 For it sparkles with Annie :
 It glows with the light
 Of the love of my Annie, 100
 With the thought of the light
 Of the eyes of my Annie.

IV.

THE HAUNTED PALACE.

In the greenest of our valleys,
 By good angels tenanted,
 Once a fair and stately palace—
 Radiant palace—reared its head.
 In the monarch Thought's dominion, 5
 It stood there ;
 Never seraph spread a pinion
 Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
 On its roof did float and flow 10
 (This—all this—was in the olden
 Time long ago),
 And every gentle air that dallied,
 In that sweet day,
 Along the ramparts plumed and pallid, 15
 A wingéd odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tuned law, 20
Round about a throne where, sitting,
Porphyrogene,
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing 25
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing, 30
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow 35
Shall dawn upon him, desolate !)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed. 40

And travellers now within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody ;
While, like a ghastly rapid river, 45
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out for ever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

V.

ANNABEL LEE.

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee ;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought 5
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child, and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee ; 10
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling 15
My beautiful Annabel Lee ;
So that her high-born kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea. 20

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me ;
Yes !—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night, 25
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we ;
And neither the angels in heaven above, 30
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee :

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee ; 35
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee ;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea, 40
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

VI.

THE CITY IN THE SEA.

Lo ! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city, lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the
best
Have gone to their eternal rest. 5
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky 10
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town ;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently, 15
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free :
Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls,
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers, 20
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathéd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie. 25
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town,
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves 30
Yawn level with the luminous waves ;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye—
Not the gaily jewelled dead,
Tempt the waters from their bed ; 35
For no ripples curl, alas,
Along that wilderness of glass ;
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea ;
No heavings hint that winds have been 40
On seas less hideously serene !

But lo, a stir is in the air !
The wave—there is a movement there !

As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide ; 45
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven !
The waves have now a redder glow,
The hours are breathing faint and low ;
And when, amid no earthly moans, 50
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

MATTHEW ARNOLD, the eldest son of the famous Dr. Arnold, editor of Thucydides, historian of Greece, and head-master of Rugby, was born at Laleham on the Thames in 1822, and died in 1888. From 1851 his life had been, officially, that of a school inspector: but long before his death he was known as one of the most considerable poets of his time, and as a critic, happy in dealing with literature and the problem of culture, less happy in dealing with special matters which the literary critic is not generally compelled to touch.

The poetry of Matthew Arnold was nearly all produced in early life before 1853: his later years were almost barren. With this the circumstances of his hard-working life may have had much to do: but his poetic vein seems to have been by nature intermittent. His poetic "note," while possessing a distinctly individual character, is curiously compounded of the despair of Byron and the Wordsworthian faith in life, tempered with an antique stoicism. Like stoicism generally, it is often admirable, but one cannot always lose one's heart to it. This "rather vague life-philosophy, this erection of a melancholy agnosticism *plus* asceticism into a creed," as Mr. Saintsbury calls it, yields some really fine

moments of poetry, as *In utrumque paratus*, *Isolation*, *A Summer Night*, *The Future*, and those great pieces into which Arnold has put his love of his University, Oxford, *The Scholar-Gipsy* and *Thyrsis*. These things are sure gains for English literature. Unfortunately, the element of despair sometimes, and that not too seldom, turning to a mere discouragement and dejection, prompts him to work which in no way delights. A stage of mere impotence, such as that in which Arnold presents himself to us

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born,

is not fit for poetic expression, since poetry lives by great enthusiasm or great despair. But Arnold compensates us again for this by such delightful work in nature poetry and classical legend as the songs here taken from *Empedocles on Etna*, or excursions into mediaeval romance like *The Merman*, *The Church of Brou*, and parts of *Tristram and Iseult*.

In order to include Arnold in a selection which, like this, passes over Tennyson and Browning, it was again well to omit those poems which are characteristic of him in that they express the "malady of the century." Those here included do yet represent an aspect of him whereby he enters definitely into the literary history of his day. Tennyson and Browning had continued and amplified the Romantic movement, the former at first with grievous faults of taste, the latter with a large leaven of wilfulness and wrongheadedness. Round them upsprang a mushroom school, well named "Spasmodic," exulting in caprice, lawlessness, and violence

done upon the modest essence of poetry. Against these Arnold appeared as a protest. He represented, in style, as Professor Saintsbury says, "the simpler side of classicalism"—what some people would force us to regard as classicalism pure and simple—"an almost prim and quaker elegance, a sort of childlike grace." In this respect he bears a strong likeness to his contemporary Coventry Patmore, who was, however, a greater poet than Arnold, and more truly born to classic style, not merely graceful and elegant, but strong.

Arnold's reaction against caprice led him to strange extremes, such as declaring that everything in poetry depends upon the subject—an excellent saying if you have an absolute poet writing absolute poetry: and in that case the converse would also be true and all would depend upon the form. The same heresy reappears in his famous definition of poetry as a criticism of life—a criticism which he modified, it is true, by adding, "under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetical truth and poetic beauty," but without seeing that he travelled in a vicious circle. This heresy arose out of Arnold's preoccupation with the actuality and effectiveness, for purposes of general culture, of poetry. He sought always after "profound application of ideas to life," and preferred the poets in whom he found it, as Goethe, or in whom he thought that he found it, as Byron, set by him above Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats.

For Arnold viewed poetry and literature always in their relation to general culture, to civility, to the conduct of life. Criticism he defined as having "for its main function to understand and utter the best that is

known and thought in the world": it was a means of cosmopolitan culture whereby each nation could correct its faults and supply its shortcomings from whatever was excellent abroad. It can be now forgotten that Arnold was led, in the exercise of this function, into "miry ways of alien art": it will be remembered to his credit that he led the attack on that smug self-complacency which dominated England in the middle Victorian period, and which he aptly styled Philistinism.

I.

IN UTRUMQUE PARATUS.

If, in the silent mind of One all-pure,
 At first imagined lay
 The sacred world ; and by procession sure
 From those still deeps, in form and colour drest,
 Seasons alternating, and night and day, 5
 The long-mused thought to north, south, east, and west,
 Took then its all-seen way ;

O waking on a world which thus-wise springs !
 Whether it needs thee count
 Betwixt thy waking and the birth of things 10
 Ages or hours—O waking on life's stream !
 By lonely pureness to the all-pure fount
 (Only by this thou canst) the colour'd dream
 Of life remount !

Thin, thin the pleasant human noises grow, 15
 And faint the city gleams ;
 Rare the lone pastoral huts—marvel not thou !
 The solemn peaks but to the stars are known,
 But to the stars, and the cold lunar beams ;
 Alone the sun arises, and alone 20
 Spring the great streams.

But, if the wild unfather'd mass no birth
 In divine seats hath known ;
 In the blank, echoing solitude if Earth, ·
 Rocking her obscure body to and fro, 25
 Ceases not from all time to heave and groan,
 Unfruitful oft, and at her happiest throe
 Forms, what she forms, alone ;

O seeming sole to awake, thy sun-bathed head
 Piercing the solemn cloud 30
 Round thy still dreaming brother-world outspread !
 O man, whom Earth, thy long-vest mother, bare
 Not without joy—so radiant, so endow'd
 (Such happy issue crown'd her painful care)—
 Be not too proud ! 35

Oh when most self-exalted most alone,
 Chief dreamer, own thy dream !
 Thy brother-world stirs at thy feet unknown,
 Who hath a monarch's hath no brother's part ;
 Yet doth thine inmost soul with yearning teem. 40
 —Oh, what a spasm shakes the dreamer's heart !
"I, too, but seem."

II.

THE FUTURE.

A WANDERER is man from his birth.
 He was born in a ship
 On the breast of the river of Time ;
 Brimming with wonder and joy
 He spreads out his arms to the light, 5
 Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts been.
Whether he wakes
Where the snowy mountainous pass,
Echoing the screams of the eagles, 10
Hems in its gorges the bed
Of the new-born clear-flowing stream ;
Whether he first sees light
Where the river in gleaming rings
Sluggishly winds through the plain ; 15
Whether in sound of the swallowing sea—
As is the world on the banks,
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each, as he glides,
Fable and dream 20
Of the lands which the river of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been closed.
Only the tract where he sails
He wots of ; only the thoughts, 25
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time ?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough ? 30
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then roam'd on her breast,
Her vigorous, primitive sons ?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear 35
As Rebekah read, when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well ?
Who guards in her breast

As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure ? 40

What bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near,
As flashing as Moses felt 45
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste ?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him ?

This tract which the river of Time 50
Now flows through with us, is the plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Border'd by cities and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream.
And we on its breast, our minds 55
Are confused as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot as the sights which we see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge 60
In a blacker, incessanter line ;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,
Flatter the plain where it flows,
Fiercer the sun overhead. 65
That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed. 70

Haply, the river of Time—
 As it grows, as the towns on its marge
 Fling their wavering lights
 On a wider, statelier stream—
 May acquire, if not the calm 75
 Of its early mountainous shore,
 Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush
 Of the grey expanse where he floats,
 Freshening its current and spotted with foam 80
 As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
 Peace to the soul of the man on its breast—
 As the pale waste widens around him,
 As the banks fade dimmer away,
 As the stars come out, and the night-wind 85
 Brings up the stream
 Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

III.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN.

Come, dear children, let us away ;
 Down and away below !
 Now my brothers call from the bay,
 Now the great winds shoreward blow,
 Now the salt tides seaward flow ; 5
 Now the wild white horses play,
 Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
 Children dear, let us away !
 This way, this way !

Call her once before you go— 10
 Call once yet !

In a voice that she will know ;
" Margaret ! Margaret ! "
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear ; 15
Children's voices, wild with pain—
Surely she will come again !
Call her once and come away ;
This way, this way !
" Mother dear, we cannot stay ! 20
The wild white horses foam and fret.
Margaret ! Margaret ! "

Come, dear children, come away down ;
Call no more !
One last look at the white-walled town, 25
And the little grey church on the windy shore ;
Then come down !
She will not come though you call all day ;
Come away, come away !

Children dear, was it yesterday 30
We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell ?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep, 35
Where the winds are all asleep ;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ; 40
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine ;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye ? 45

When did music come this way ?
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away ?
Once she sate with you and me, 50
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.
She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea ; 55
She said : " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !
And I lose my poor soul, Merman ! here with thee."
I said : " Go up, dear heart, through the waves ; 60
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves !"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?
" The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan ; 65
Long prayers," I said ; " in the world they say ;
Come ! " I said ; and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town ;
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still, 70
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded
panes. 75
She sate by the pillar ; we saw her clear :
" Margaret, hist ! come quick, we are here !

Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone ;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look, 80
For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book !
Loud prays the priest ; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more !
Come away, come down, call no more !

Down, down, down ! 85
Down to the depths of the sea !
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings : "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy ! 90
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well ;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun !"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully, 95
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea ;
And her eyes are set in a stare ; 100
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh ; 105
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children ;
Come, children, come down !
The hoarse wind blows coldly ; 110
Lights shine in the town.

She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door ;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar. 115

We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing: " Here came a mortal, 120
But faithless was she !
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow, 125
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low ;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly 130
On the blanch'd sands a gloom ;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry. 135
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town ;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down.
Singing: " There dwells a loved one, 140
But cruel is she !
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

IV.

REQUIESCAT.

STREW on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew !
In quiet she reposes ;
Ah, would that I did too !

Her mirth the world required ; 5
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound. 10
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample spirit,
It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.
To-night it doth inherit 15
The vasty hall of death.

V.

ISOLATION.

YES! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone*.
The islands feel the enclasping flow, 5
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
 And they are swept by balms of spring,
 And in their glens, on starry nights,
 The nightingales divinely sing ; 10
 And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
 Across the sounds and channels pour—

Oh ! then a longing like despair
 Is to their farthest caverns sent ;
 For surely once, they feel, we were 15
 Parts of a single continent !
 Now round us spreads the watery plain—
 Oh might our marges meet again !

Who order'd, that their longing's fire
 Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd ? 20
 Who renders vain their deep desire ?—
 A God, a God their severance ruled !
 And bade betwixt their shores to be
 The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

VI.

SONGS OF CALLICLES.

1.

THE track winds down to the clear stream,
 To cross the sparkling shallows ; there
 The cattle love to gather, on their way
 To the high mountain-pastures, and to stay,
 Till the rough cow-herds drive them past, 5
 Knee-deep in the cool ford ; for 'tis the last
 Of all the woody, high, well-water'd dells

On Etna ; and the beam
Of noon is broken there by chestnut-boughs
Down its steep verdant sides ; the air 10
Is freshen'd by the leaping stream, which throws
Eternal showers of spray on the moss'd roots
Of trees, and veins of turf, and long dark shoots
Of ivy-plants, and fragrant hanging bells
Of hyacinths, and on late anemones, 15
That muffle its wet banks ; but glade,
And stream, and sward, and chestnut-trees,
End here ; Etna beyond, in the broad glare
Of the hot noon, without a shade,
Slope behind slope, up to the peak, lies bare ; 20
The peak, round which the white clouds play.

In such a glen, on such a day,
On Pelion, on the grassy ground,
Chiron, the aged Centaur lay,
The young Achilles standing by. 25
The Centaur taught him to explore
The mountains ; where the glens are dry
And the tired Centaurs come to rest,
And where the soaking springs abound
And the straight ashes grow for spears, 30
And where the hill-goats come to feed,
And the sea-eagles build their nest.
He show'd him Phthia far away,
And said : O boy, I taught this lore
To Peleus, in long distant years ! 35
He told him of the Gods, the stars,
The tides ;—and then of mortal wars,
And of the life which heroes lead
Before they reach the Elysian place
And rest in the immortal mead ; 40
And all the wisdom of his race.

2.

FAR, far from here,
 The Adriatic breaks in a warm bay
 Among the green Illyrian hills ; and there
 The sunshine in the happy glens is fair,
 And by the sea, and in the brakes, 5
 The grass is cool, the sea-side air
 Buoyant and fresh, the mountain flowers
 More virginal and sweet than ours.
 And there, they say, two bright and aged snakes,
 Who once were Cadmus and Harmonia, 10
 Bask in the glens or on the warm sea-shore,
 In breathless quiet, after all their ills ;
 Nor do they see their country, nor the place
 Where the Sphinx lived among the frowning hills,
 Nor the unhappy palace of their race, 15
 Nor Thebes, nor the Ismenus, any more.

There those two live, far in the Illyrian brakes !
 They had stay'd long enough to see,
 In Thebes, the billow of calamity
 Over their own dear children roll'd, 20
 Curse upon curse, pang upon pang,
 For years, they sitting helpless in their home,
 A gray old man and woman ; yet of old
 The Gods had to their marriage come,
 And at the banquet all the Muses sang. 25

Therefore they did not end their days
 In sight of blood ; but were rapt, far away,
 To where the west wind plays,
 And murmurs of the Adriatic come
 To those untrodden mountain-lawns ; and there 30

Placed safely in changed forms, the pair
 Wholly forget their first sad life, and home,
 And all that Theban woe, and stray
 For ever through the glens, placid and dumb.

3.

THE lyre's voice is lovely everywhere;
 In the court of Gods, in the city of men,
 And in the lonely rock-strewn mountain glen,
 In the still mountain air.

Only to Typho it sounds hatefully ; 5
 To Typho only, the rebel o'erthrown,
 Through whose heart Etna drives her roots of stone,
 To imbed them in the sea.

Wherefore dost thou groan so loud ?
 Wherefore do thy nostrils flash, 10
 Through the dark night, suddenly,
 Typho, such red jets of flame ?—
 Is thy tortured heart still proud ?
 Is thy fire-scathed arm still rash ?
 Still alert thy stone-crush'd frame ? 15
 Doth thy fierce soul still deplore
 Thine ancient rout by the Cilician hills,
 And that curst treachery on the Mount of Gore ?
 Do thy bloodshot eyes still weep
 The fight which crown'd thine ills, 20
 Thy last mischance on this Sicilian deep ?
 Hast thou sworn, in thy sad lair,
 Where erst the strong sea-currents suck'd thee down,
 Never to cease to writhe, and try to rest,
 Letting the sea-stream wander through thy hair ? 25
 That thy groans, like thunder prest,

Begin to roll, and almost drown
The sweet notes whose lulling spell
Gods and the race of mortals love so well,
When through thy caves thou hearest music swell ? 30

But an awful pleasure bland
Spreading o'er the Thunderer's face,
When the sound climbs near his seat,
The Olympian council sees ;
As he lets his lax right hand, 35
Which the lightnings doth embrace,
Sink upon his mighty knees.

And the eagle, at the beck
Of the appeasing, gracious harmony,
Droops all his sheeny, brown, deep-feather'd neck, 40
Nestling nearer to Jove's feet ;

While o'er his sovran eye
The curtains of the blue films slowly meet
And the white Olympus-peaks
Rosily brighten, and the soothed Gods smile 45
At one another from their golden chairs,
And no one round the charmed circle speaks.

Only the loved Hebe bears
The cup about, whose draughts beguile
Pain and care, with a dark store 50
Of fresh-pull'd violets wreathed and nodding o'er ;
And her flush'd feet glow on the marble floor.

NOTES.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

I. To the Muses (from *Poetical Sketches*, 1783).

This poem is placed first, as in the fourth section of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, being a "trumpet-note before the dawn."

The Muses, the fair Nine, were in Greek myth daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (Memory), and each was the "patron virgin" of one of the arts. But they might be, and often were, invoked collectively by poets, the supreme art of verse being under the ward of them all.

1. *Ida*, a mountain near Troy, whereon the gods often descended with intent to meet favoured mortals or intervene in human affairs. The Greeks, like many early peoples, imagined that mountains were the dwelling-places, or at least the haunts, of their divinities. Later on these dwelling-places became fixed and local: the gods dwelt together on snowy Olympus, the Muses on Parnassus. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i. 514, of the Ionian or Greek gods:

"these first in *Creet*

And *Ida* known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold *Olympus* ruled the middle Air
Their highest Heav'n."

3. *chambers of the Sun*. Apollo, the Sun deity, was also the god of music. Hence the allusion to "ancient melody" in line 4.

7. *region* was formerly used simply for the upper air and sky. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 509, "rend the region"; 608, "the region kites"; *Sonnet* 32, "the region cloud." The Roman astrologers gave the name *regiones* to divisions of the heavens.

14. *bards*, poets. A word of Celtic origin. Gaelic, *bard*.

15. The expletive *do* gives the line a "languid movement" in harmony with the meaning. A similar effect is produced in the following line by breaking it exactly in the middle (pause after

forced). Blake of course refers to the conditions of poetry in his time; see Introduction II.

strings, i.e. of the lyre, the instrument of the Muses and of Apollo. *languid*, i.e. slackened, because little used.

II. To the Evening Star (from *Poetical Sketches*).

The blank verse of Blake is peculiar and is even thought to need correction. Into this short poem D. G. Rossetti has introduced four emendations, all admitted by Messrs. Ellis and Yeats. Of these I have accepted one, omitting, in line 6, the adjective *silver* before *dew*, since it not merely makes an Alexandrine of the line, but makes the word *silver* in line 10 awkward. Rather than allow a beautiful passage to be thus spoiled, I have tampered with Blake's text. Otherwise it seems defensible. Thus in line 3—where Rossetti would read *Thy brilliant torch*—Blake simply allows himself an old liberty in omitting the first weak syllable of a line. Cf. Swinburne, *Poems and Ballads*, p. 33:

“Half a woman made with half a god.”

In line 7 I cannot believe that Blake would have written *shuts* had he meant to write *closes*; the dissyllabic pronunciation of *flower* gives a rhythm, not excellent, but allowable. The license of line 12 is the same as that of line 3, and the insertion of *then* after *And* seems needless. *Evening* in line 1 is of course trisyllabic; *influence* at the end of the poem as nearly as possible dissyllabic. A more serious fault is that of “light endings,” terminating the line on words which are not merely almost without accent and monosyllabic but also closely connected with the following word, proclitic, as articles and prepositions. The light endings of Shakespeare's later blank verse are different, being conjunctions (*and*, etc.), the relative *that*, *et similia*.

9. *speak silence with thy glimmering eyes, And wash the dusk with silver* is comparable with Tennyson at his best in nature-poetry.

12. *dun, dusky, gloomy*. O.E. *dunn*, dark. Compare Milton, *Paradise Lost*, iii. 72, “In the dun air sublime.”

14. The word *influence*, from the Latin *influo*, to flow in upon, denoted, in the old astrological lore, an actual flowing-in of the *virtue*, or innate power, of the heavenly bodies upon the earth. This influence was conceived as being exerted both on things physical and on things moral. Just as the sun sustains all natural life, so the stars were supposed to continue his work at night. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, iv. 666:

“life
In Nature and all things, which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heate
Of various *influence* foment and warme,

Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
 Their stellar *virtue* on all kinds that grow
 On Earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the Sun's more potent Ray."

Ibid. ix. 103:

"Terrestrial Heav'n, danc't round by other Heav'ns
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious Lamps,
 Light above Light, for thee alone, as seems,
 In thee concentrating all their precious beams
 Of sacred *influence* . . . in thee,
 Not in themselves, all their known *virtue* appears
 Productive in Herb, Plant, and nobler birth
 Of Creatures animate with gradual life
 Of Growth, Sense, Reason, all summ'd up in Man."

Ibid. ii. 1034:

"the sacred *influence* Of Light appears."

Ibid. x. 661: After the fall of man the angels

"taught the fixt (stars)
 Their *influence* malignant when to showre,
 Which of them rising with the sun or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous."

We find the word thus used in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, 862, with reference to the sun:

"O thou clear god and patron of all light,
 From whom each lamp and shining star doth borrow
 The beauteous *influence* that makes him bright";

in *Hamlet*, i. 1. 119, with reference to the moon and its action on the tides:

"the moist star
 Upon whose *influence* Neptune's empire stands."

In the moral sphere we find the word denoting some harmony of the stars with events on earth. In Milton's Hymn, *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, 69:

"The stars with deep amaze
 Stand fixt in stedfast gaze,
 Bending one way their pretious *influence*."

At the nuptials of Adam and Eve, *Paradise Lost*, viii. 511:

"all Heav'n
 And happie Constellations on that houre
 Shed their selectest *influence*."

In the latter passage we perceive a hint of that greater and more important sense of the word, that the stars determined sublunary happenings and held destiny in charge. For this reason the

"aspect" of the constellations at a person's birth or at the beginning of any great undertaking was consulted. The belief is well expressed by Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, iii. 617-20:

"But O, Fortune, executrice of wierdes!
O influences of this hevens hye!
Soth is, that, under god, ye ben our hierdes,
Though to us bestes been the causes wrye."

Fortune, executress of wierdes (destinies) and the stars are, under command of God, who has handed over to them the fulfilment of certain decrees, reserving to his providence the power to interfere, the herds (shepherds) of men entrusted like beasts to their care, and are to these beasts often causes wry (causes of harm). The theory is fully expounded in *Boethius*, Chaucer's translation, Book iv., Prose vi. A capital passage is that in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, i. 2. 128-137: "This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune,—often the surfeit of our own behaviour,—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and traitors, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on." Note that even the word *disaster*, occurring above, is an astrological term for a baleful star (Latin *dis* + *astrum*). In *The Tempest*, i. 2. 182, the magician Prospero says:

"I find my zenith doth depend upon
A most auspicious star, whose influence
If now I court not but omit, my fortunes
Will ever after droop,"

zenith here being an astrological term for the culminating point of fortune. In *Measure for Measure*, iii. 1. 9, life is

"Servile to all the skye's influences."

In *Sonnet XV*. Shakespeare puts this idea to the finest poetic use:

"When I consider everything that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment":

this earth and life is but a painted show, a mask, a dream (a thought recurring often in Shakespeare's graver musing), the sense whereof is hidden elsewhere. This general idea of stary influence was so common a matter of thought and speech that the authorised translators of the Bible having, in *Job*, xxxviii. 31, to translate a Hebrew text, thus rendered literally, *Canst thou fasten the bindings of the Shining Stars or loosen the bonds of the Giant?* wrote as follows: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences

of the Pleiades or loosen the bonds of Orion?" Whence Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vii. 373:

"the gray
Dawn and the *Pleiades* before him (the sun) danc'd,
Shedding *sweet influence*."

Milton's contemporary, Herrick, writes, in that one of his *Noble Numbers*, entitled, *To Finde God*, thus:

"Shew me the worlde of starres and whence
They noiselesse spill their *influence*."

Naturally the word was used metaphorically. Shakespeare has this, *All's Well that Ends Well*, ii. 1. 54, concerning fashionable lords: "They wear themselves in the cap of the time, there do muster true gait, eat, speak, and move under *the influence of the most received star*." Metaphor led to a new sense of the word: influence was attributed to persons, a kind of inspiration proceeding from them, and naturally first from their eyes, e.g. Milton, *L'Allegro*, 121:

"store of Ladies, whose bright eies
Rain *influence*, and judge the prise,
Of Wit or Arms";

their eyes inspiring their courtiers. Then it was attributed to a person's presence, Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ii. 2. 112:

"Under allowance of your great *aspect*,
Whose *influence*, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phoebus' front";

afterwards to the personality in general, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iii. 1. 183:

"She is my essence and I leave to be,
If I be not by her fair *influence*
Foster'd, illumined, cherish'd, kept alive."

Timon of Athens, v. 1. 65:

"you
Whose star-like nobleness gave life and *influence*
To their whole being!"

(where note that the scansion of the word is the same as Blake's); *Sonnet LXXVIII*:

"Yet be most proud of that which I compile
Whose *influence* is thine and born of thee."

In these two last examples note that the influence becomes a standing property of the person or thing on whom it is shed. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ix. 310, the eyes being still the medium of transmission, we find *influence* and *virtue* conjoined in the higher moral sense:

"I from the *influence* of thy looks receive
Access in every *vertue*, in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger."

In all these instances the original sense of a flowing-in is alive and active: it is lost in our modern use of the word, which has now become one of those ossified metaphors whereof, as Carlyle said (*Sartor Resartus*, Book I. chapter xi.), our current speech mainly consists. The fact that one can read, as I read in a late periodical, such a seemingly-authentic metaphorical use of the word as this, "As the *influence* of science *filters* down," shows how far we have travelled from its old essential signification.

III. Song: How sweet I roamed (from *Poetical Sketches*).

In this and in the following *Song* Blake more closely approaches the Elizabethans in form than elsewhere. The theme, love taking possession of the whole soul and holding it in bondage, is old. It is said that this lyric was written before the poet was fourteen years of age.

2. summer's pride, glory of summer.

3. the Prince of Love. In classic mythology Eros or Cupid (Desire), son of Venus, goddess of beauty; or, in older Greek legend, the original generating principle of things.

10. Phœbus, Phœbus Apollo, or Apollo, god of light, inspiration, and song. (See Note on Blake, i. 3.) Here he inspires song, the *vocal rage*, as Blake detestably calls it in a phrase borrowed from the stock "poetic (?) diction" of the eighteenth century. Concerning this I allow myself the pleasure of quoting a note from Mrs. Meynell's anthology, *The Flower of the Mind*, p. 337: "Pope and all the politer poets nursed something they were pleased to call a 'rage,' and this expatiated (to use another word of their own) beyond all bounds. Of sheer voluntary extremes it is not in the 17th century conceit that we should seek examples, but in an 18th century 'rage.' A 'noble rage,' properly provoked, could be backed to write more trash than fancy ever tempted the half-incredulous sweet poet of the older time to run upon. He was fancy's child, and the bard of the 18th century was the child of common sense with straws in his hair—vainly arranged there. The 18th century was never content with a moderate mind; it invented 'rage'; it matched rage with a flagrant diction mingled of Latin words and simple English words made vacant and ridiculous, and these were the worst; it was resolved to be behind no century in passion—nay, to show the way, to fire the nations. Addison taught himself, as his hero taught the battle, 'where to rage'; and in the later years of the same literary age, Johnson summoned the lapsed and absent fury, with no kind of misgiving as to the resulting verse. Take such a phrase as 'the maddened land'; there, indeed, is a word coined by the noble rage as the last century evoked it. 'The maddened land' is a phrase intended to prove that the law-giver of taste, Johnson himself, could lodge the fury in his

breast when opportunity occurred. 'And dubious title shakes the madded land.' It would be hard to find anything, even in Addison, more flagrant and less fair." See on this subject generally, Introduction II. The metaphor of straws in the hair refers to the habit of maniacs.

11. **He**: not Phœbus, but the Prince of Love.

IV. Song: My silks and fine array (also from *Poetical Sketches*).

2. **languished air**: the affected air of one living carelessly, vainly, without deep controlling passion.

5. **yew**. Sprays of yew were in old time strewn upon coffins. Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, ii. 4. 56,

"My shroud of white, stuck all with yew";

M. Arnold, *Requiescat*,

"Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew."

deck, adorn. Old Dutch *decken*, to hide. This is the same word as the noun 'deck' of a ship, but has no connection with the verb 'decorate,' which is derived from the Latin *decorare*.

7. **His** refers to the beloved.

11, 12. These two lines have the true Elizabethan "depth of tone" (Palgrave). To the lover, utterly absorbed in passion, the beloved's heart is the one sanctuary of love, its tomb here, since he is cold; and, by a splendid exaggeration, all other lovers in the world are made to do it homage. Here an individual love, by its own intensity, becomes love of the idea.

13, 14. **Bring me an axe and spade**, etc. There is here a reminiscence of the snatch of song sung by the Gravedigger in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Act v., Scene 1:

"A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet;
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet."

A full version of the original lyric appears in Tottel's *Miscellany* (1557) under the title *The aged lover renounceth love*. Its authorship is uncertain, but it has been attributed to Thomas Lord Vaux.

V. A song of singing. Introduction to the *Songs of Innocence*, 1789.

The title here used is Mr. Henley's.

3. **On a cloud I saw a child**. In this book (and elsewhere) the child is to Blake a manifestation of the angelic, the divine, of the golden age he sought to bring back among men.

6. *cheer*, demeanour, expression. Originally the word meant 'countenance.' From Old French *chere*, *chiere*, face, look; Gk. *kápa*, the head.

16, 17. Pens were formerly made from reeds, and still are, for such purposes as the writing of Hebrew, where clear distinction between thick and thin strokes, sharp and rounded corners, is a necessity.

VI. The Tiger (first printed in *Songs of Experience*, 1794).

A splendid expression of wonder before the beauty of exceeding life, even when manifested in cruel force.

2. *the forests of the night*, a favourite image of Blake. Night is, as it were, a vast forest, casting thick shade, a tangle of error. Cf. *Europe*,

"man fled . . . and hid
In forests of night; then all the eternal forests" (i.e. the
pre-existent night of chaos) "were divided
Into earths rolling in circles of space."

The tiger *burns*, through these forests of the night, out of which, like all else that lives, it is created, by reason of its vivid abounding energy. Blake is dealing with the creation of the tiger, hence the use of the image here.

7, 8. The form *dare* is really a past tense, though it is now generally used as a present. The third person singular *he dare*, which is grammatically correct, is gradually being displaced by the incorrect form *dares*. Here however *dare* is used as a past tense.

12. *What dread hand and what dread feet?* So in the original edition printed from plates written by Blake's own hand. In the earlier MS. the sense was continued thus, in a rejected stanza,

"Could filch it from the furnace deep?"

For the reading, which appears in many editions, "What dread hand formed thy dread feet?" which gives an uncouth rhythm, owing to the undue length of the word *formed*, there seems to be no authority beyond an unauthorized conjecture of D. G. Rossetti.

17. Remember that the morning-stars were "sons of God" and "sang together," and that the fallen armed archangel was Lucifer, star of the morning.

IX. Ah, Sunflower.

The single sentence of which this poem consists is, according to the books, ungrammatical; unless we look on the exclamation *Ah, sunflower* as the principal clause. Yet, poetically, all is right; the idea is conveyed. The sunflower, that follows the

sun to his setting, is a type of that emotion which has always led poets to imagine, in the lands of sunset, a happy country, a Hy-Brasil as in Celtic legend, where all yearning is appeased and all thwarted desire finds fruition.

5, 6. **pined** and **shrouded** are participles. "Pined away" = wasted away. O.E. *pinan*, to torment.

7. **aspire**, rise, mount, ascend. Compare Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, v. 5. Song:

"Whose flames aspire

As thoughts do blow them, higher and higher."

X. Love's Secret.

7. **ghastly**, terrible; often erroneously thought to be a form of *ghostly*, with which it has no connection. *Ghastly* is derived from the root of the Old English *gaestan*, to terrify (from which also is derived 'aghost'), together with the suffix *lic* (=like). The *h* has somehow crept in: the M.E. spelling *gastly*, *agast* being more correct.

ROBERT BURNS.

I. Of a' the Airts.

1. a', all. airts, points (of the compass).
3. bonie; usually spelt *bonny*.
5. row, roll.
14. shaw, wood, thicket. From Old English *scaga*, a shaw; akin to O.E. *scúwa*, a shadow.
16. minds, puts in mind, reminds.

II. My Bonnie Mary.

The first four lines of this lyric were taken by Burns from an old song.

2. tassie, cup. Fr. *tasse*.
4. service, that which is served, so an allowance, a measure. Compare Chatterton, *Kew Gardens*:
 " With farthing candles, chandeliers of tin,
 And services of water, rum and gin."
5. Leith, the port of Edinburgh, on the Firth of Forth.
7. The Berwick-law. North Berwick Law, a conspicuous height in Haddingtonshire overlooking the Firth of Forth.—HENLEY and HENDERSON.

III. A Red, Red Rose.

This song is "an arrangement, first and last, of fancies and expressions current in popular song long before Burns wrote."
 —HENLEY and HENDERSON.

8. gang, go, become. Icelandic, *ganga*, to go.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

I. Lucy. (1) 'Three years she grew.'

16. *balm*, see note on Keats, iii. 43. An ointment is made from the aromatic balsam; hence 'balm' means here 'soothing power,' 'healing.'

18. *insensate*, void of sense.

19. *state*, stateliness, calm majesty.

(2) 'She dwelt among the untrodden ways.'

44. *Dove*, a tributary of the Trent river. It forms a great part of the boundary line between Staffordshire and Derbyshire.

(3) 'A slumber did my spirit seal.'

The meaning of the first stanza is this: The poet was wrapped in a dream, a slumber of false security, forgetting that Lucy was human and therefore mortal; he had no fear that she might pass away.

60. *diurnal*, daily.

II. To the Cuckoo.

6. *twofold shout*, the cry of two sounds, "cuckoo!"

31. *unsubstantial* substance (Lat. *sub*, under, *stare*, to stand) was in the older philosophy conceived as something *underlying* the shows of things, something beyond the merely seen, heard, and felt, the ground of reality. *Unsubstantial* then came to mean the unreal, the fancied.

III. The Solitary Reaper.

This poem is famous as the essential expression of the spirit of Celtic legend. Of surviving races, the Celtic have, more than any other, a past of ruined glory, a cheerless present, to contemplate. The dreaming that dominates their nature leads them out of the present world into the shadowy past; that same dreaminess causes them to take a "luxury in grief," to brood fondly on the disaster that has followed their course in history, on

"old unhappy far-off things
And battles long ago."

Matthew Arnold has chosen, as typical of their poetry, the line from Ossian :

"They went forth to the battle, but they always fell."

This poetry survives, outside long unread manuscripts, only in the songs of peasants. Observe that here the personal details in the last stanza are not, as often in Wordsworth's verse, irrelevantly egotistic, but help in expressing the haunting nature of the girl's strain.

IV. Ode: Intimations of Immortality, etc.

The controlling idea of this ode is taken from Greek philosophy. Pythagoras (B.C. 555), having made the soul's immortality to consist in a succession of lives under various bodily shapes, explained knowledge as a recollection of what had been before experienced. Plato (B.C. 409-347), investigating knowledge, and finding in it certain elements not explainable from experience—what later philosophers have called innate ideas, or *a priori* conditions of knowledge—adopted the Pythagorean theory, with this difference, that he made the soul to have dwelt formerly in the supernal region of the pure idea, and so to have become imbued with the eternal and real. Wordsworth, perceiving in childhood an innocence—as Blake did—a sense as of a Paradise, as of a heaven or earth, a living close to the true life, which every new experience of this world makes fainter—remember Blake's distinction between innocence and experience—explains it as the reminiscence of a pre-natal existence in the presence of God.

A reproach justly made against this ode by Mr. Watts-Dunton (article on Poetry, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed., vol. xix., p. 271) is that the length of lines and rhyme-arrangement are not inevitable. No poem is irregular. Either it is cast in fixed and easy form, or its metre is continually determined by the emotion alone. It was the bane of English poetry that men for years supposed Pindar to have written without any law, and that consequently, if one desired to seem, not merely be, inspired and "Pindarick," one should cast all metre to the winds. Even Tennyson, in his young days, produced some monsters in the way of "Pindarick Odes." Wordsworth here feeling vaguely that the change of subject demands change of metre and rhythm, that the child's games and the May morning refuse the solemnity of the "eternal deep," can do no better than abruptly and foolishly to break his grave and majestic advance into a jig—a veritable "break-down." One of the most successful "irregular" poems in the language, as Mr. Watts-Dunton points out, is *Kubla Khan*. A later poet, Coventry Patmore (1821-1896), has written what will some day be fully recognized as the most perfect "irregular" odes in English, odes obedient to the finer law of the spirit.

6. of yore, formerly, of old. From Old Eng. *geara*, gen. plur. of *gear*, a year. The genitive case was often used to express the time when.

21. tabor, a small drum. Fr. *tambour*—spelt *tabour* from 13th to 16th century. In England the tabor and pipe were much used at rustic merrymakings. Cf. Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 183 :

“You would never dance again after a tabor and pipe.”

38. jubilee, a season of rejoicing. Derivation, Hebrew *yóbel*, meaning a blast of a trumpet or a shout of joy. “There is nothing,” says Skeat, “to connect this word with jubilation” (Lat. *jubilare*); the resemblance seems to be accidental.

40. coronal, chaplet. The guests at Greek and Roman banquets wore chaplets or wreaths upon their heads.

51. a tree, of many, one : a single tree, known and familiar to the poet out of all that are upon earth.

59. As the sun, rising upon one country, sets upon another, so the light of our life, rising over this world, leaves behind the eternal world.

64. Memories of the former life cling round the soul, as clouds around the sun.

71. the east : the dawn of this life, backward from which some glimpse of heaven can still be gained.

78. in her own natural kind, such as belong to her nature.

86. pigmy, dwarfish. Greek *pugmē*, the distance from the elbow to the knuckle, about $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Hence the *pugmaioi*, a race of fabulous dwarfs, received their name.

88. Fretted, made petulant.

sallies. Originally ‘sally’ means a darting or bounding. Thus it is used to signify a sudden onset of troops from a fortified place, upon their besiegers; also an outburst of extravagance, especially of gaiety. Here the reference is to the sudden rush of the mother and the shower of her kisses.

102. cons, studies. Old Eng. *cunnian*, to examine, a desiderative form from *cunnan*, to know.

103. humorous stage, stage on which men exhibit their humours, i.e. individualities, mannerisms or ruling passions. This use of the word ‘humour’ was common in Elizabethan literature. See Ben Jonson’s *Every Man in his Humour*, etc.

104. Compare Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 139-166.

Persons, characters (of a drama). Lat. *persona*, a mask, through which Greek and Roman actors spoke (*per*, through; *sonare*, to sound).

108. The whole passage is an apostrophe to the child who, though engaged in such trivial imitation of common life, is yet ever in presence of the eternal, and is thus the true prophet and seer.

111. An old Greek proverb said: "In the city of the blind the one-eyed man is king."

112. *eternal deep*, the abyss of infinity.

122. *thy being's height*: those regions of the soul remote from the dailiness of existence, whereupon, as the sunken sun upon mountain summits, the splendour of eternity yet falls.

123. The child, by his imitation of life, is making himself its slave before the hour when he will be forced into slavery to it, and is thus fighting against his own bliss.

pains, labours; French *peine*, labour, pain, from Latin *poena*, punishment, pain.

125. (Thou being) thus at strife, etc.

126. *freight*: that which burdens or weighs down.

134. *benediction*: a speaking well (Latin *benedicere*), a "song of thanks and praise" (l. 140).

142. Of all things which we perceive by our senses. Wordsworth relates that he often fell into such an ecstasy of contemplation of the spiritual in nature, that he was forced to grasp a tree or some such solid object in order to bring himself back to a sense of his worldly existence.

143. Things that fall away and vanish from us. For the sense cf. 64, "trailing clouds of glory."

146. *mortal nature*, the earthly part in us, distinguished from the heavenly.

154. *being*, a quality belonging, in the older metaphysic, to what really is, to the substance (see note on ii. 31) of this merely seeming world.

157. Indifference or unrest, both equally fatal to that impassioned contemplation, that "wise passiveness," or attentive receptivity, which was Wordsworth's spiritual life.

166. *children*, types of innocence. Coventry Patmore, *The Unknown Eros*, Book I., Ode ii., *Wind and Wave* (The spirit's sea is stirred by love towards a divine goal, the shore of heaven):

"the deafening beach,
Where forms of children in *first innocence*
Laugh and fling pebbles on the rainbow'd crest
Of its untired unrest."

167. The line is an Alexandrine, having six beats. This metre is usually written on the French model, with a strong pause directly after the third beat, *e.g.*

"The wákeful trúmp of doom | must thúnder thróugh the deép."

(Milton, *On the morning of Christ's Nativity*, 156.)

Mrs. Meynell, *The Flower of the Mind*, p. 338, justly speaks of the greater mobility and lyrical life of the Alexandrine that runs on to its term without pause, "that is organic, integral, and itself a separate unit of metre"; erring in this that she attributes the invention or at least the earliest conspicuous use of it to Cowley—for Spenser has it, and the poem of Milton before quoted presents, in thirty-one Alexandrines, twelve of this description, whereof these three fine examples:

"While Birds of Calm sit brooding on the charmed wave." (68)

"The dreadful Judge in middle Air shall spread his throne." (164)

"Swindges the scaly Horror of his fouled tail." (172)

—erring again in this that she quotes from Crashaw, as a specimen of such Alexandrine, a line of seven beats:

"Or you, more noble architects of intellectual noise."

The present line of Wordsworth, rolling on without a pause, to die away in reverberation (repetition of *o* and *r*), splendidly communicates the eternal motion of the "immortal sea."

181. **primal sympathy**, sympathy, fellow-feeling (Greek *σύν*, with, *σάβειν*, to feel); here the original sense of kinship between man and nature (see Introduction I.).

187. General sense: Though the poet has grown older and lost the innocence of childhood, yet that innocence, that freedom, that delight, is all that he has lost; he still loves nature, being indeed now more attentive to her meaning, and more habitually under her spiritual influence than when he was a careless child, half-inattentive to her whisperings.

189. **Yet**, still, as yet, up to this time. Now usually found only after a negative, but common in this sense in Elizabethan English. Cf. Ford, *Perkin Warbeck*, ii. 3. 187.

"Yet our tide

Runs smoothly without adverse winds."

190. **only**, modifies 'one.'

192. **fast**, flow with impatient movement as though chafing against restraint.

199. This line expresses the meaning which the thought of death, for the "faith that looks through death," imparts to the

sunset clouds; human life is a contest, a race for a prize, and death confers this prize, this glory, upon it, just as the clouds of the west are a splendour around the sun's passing. The metaphor is taken from the great Olympian games held every year at Pisa in Elis during the greatest Greek national festival, by the recurrence of which the Greeks reckoned the era. The palm was a prize given at these contests.

202. *blows, blooms.* O.E. *blowan*. The verb 'blow' = puff has a different origin.

**V. Sonnets. (1) Composed upon Westminster Bridge,
Sept. 3, 1802.**

The finest touch in this sonnet is that whereby the vast city is made "open unto the fields," to the morning freshness and purity of the meadows that, at a distance, surround it, "the high lawns" that appear "under the opening eye-lids of the morn" (Milton, *Lycidas*, 25).

6. Wordsworth was perhaps thinking of a Greek city, where the theatres or amphitheatres, consisting of open, circular, or semi-circular tiers of seats, are a striking feature.

13. Observe how beautifully the quietness of the houses becomes a *sleep*, the attribute of a living creature; the transition being thus facilitated to the image of the city's "mighty heart."

(2) 'The World is too much with us; late and soon.'

1. *The world*, the deadening habit of life. Cf. the religious use of the word.

2. *lay waste*, make sterile.

4. *sordid boon*, a gift of no value.

13. *Proteus*, an old Greek sea-divinity, who changed his shape more than once when anyone sought to seize him: a personification of the restless sea, and also, since, when caught, he imparted wisdom, of the infinite diversity of nature, whose secret eludes the searcher, even in the nineteenth century: hence the adjective *Protean*.

14. *Triton*, the Greek merman. His trumpet was a curled sea-shell: hence *wreathed horn*.

(3) 'Surprised by joy—impatient as the wind.'

"This was in fact suggested by my daughter Catharine long after her death."—WORDSWORTH.

4. *vicissitude* (Latin, *vicissitudo*, *vices*, change, changes), human change of joy or grief.

11. *Save one*, save the first pang of grief when he knew first that his child was dead.

(4) 'It is a beauteous evening, calm and free.'

Like many of Wordsworth's finest poems this sonnet has its weaknesses—the flat first line, the fourth, the word "everlastingly" in the eighth quite unnecessary after "eternal" in the preceding line.—The sextet presents a thought already found in the *Ode*: only the mature man needs to be attentive to nature's hints of the divine, the child is everywhere accompanied by heaven.

12. *Abraham's bosom*, *St. Luke*, xvi. 22. To sleep in Abraham's bosom, to be gathered up, after death, in their great forefather's arms, was, for the Hebrews, the felicity of the other life.

WALTER SCOTT.

I. **Coronach** (from *The Lady of the Lake*, Canto III.).

Coronach, a dirge, song of lamentation for the dead. Gaelic, *comh*, with, + *ranach*, roaring.

5. **font**, fountain, spring.

10. **ears that are hoary**. Compare *The Gospel according to St. John*, iv. 35, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

12. **Wails**, bewails, laments.

14. **searest**, most withered.

17. **corrai**, an excavation or hollow in the side of a hill. Gaelic, *corrach*, steep. Cf. Scott, *Waverley*, xvi., "The graves of the slain are still to be seen in that little corri, or bottom, on the opposite side of the burn."

18. **cumber**, confusion, distress. Fr. *combrer*, to hinder; Lat. *cumulus*, a heap. The 'b' is intrusive.

19. **foray** (a Lowland Scotch form of 'forage'), an expedition to collect forage or fodder; a common Border term for a pillaging expedition.

II. **Time** (from *The Antiquary*, chap. x.).

2. **carle**, man, fellow. O.E. *carl*. Cf. Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, *Prolog.* 548:

"The mellere was a stout carl for the nones."

(Mod. :— 'The miller was a stout carle for the nonce.')

7. **Alternate**. Adjectival form used adverbially.

11. **wane**, decrease. Old English, *wanian*.

wax, increase. Old English, *weaxan*.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

I. *Kubla Khan*.

Coleridge relates that, being near Porlock in 1797, and having taken an anodyne, prescribed for some slight indisposition, he fell asleep at the moment that he was reading, in *Purchas's Pilgrimage* (1613)—“Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall.” During his sleep, which lasted three hours, he composed from two to three hundred lines, the images and expressions rising up spontaneously in his mind, without any feeling of effort. On awaking he instantly wrote down what is preserved of the poem, but—and this is the most lamentable incident in Coleridge's shiftless career—he allowed himself to be called out and detained above an hour by “a person on business from Porlock”; finding, when he returned to his room, that he retained nothing beyond “a vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision,” and a few scattered lines and images. From these he “frequently purposed” to finish the poem: but we know his “frequent purposes.”

It is interesting to contrast this account of a poem due entirely to “inspiration,” with Edgar Poe's whimsical story of the writing of the *Raven*: how, desiring to write a poem, he settled on Beauty as his province, and sadness, or melancholy, as the tone of its highest manifestation; how, having decided that his poem should be short, he chose as pivot for its construction a refrain, which should be monotonous, sonorous, and brief, the word “Nevermore” being the first to suggest itself; how, seeking a plausible reason for the continuous repetition of this word, he lighted upon the device of a non-reasoning creature capable of speech, a raven being such, and in keeping with the melancholy tone of the poem; how, thinking over the problem of uniting this device with the melancholy of Beauty, and considering that the most poetical melancholy is that arising from the death of a beautiful woman, he imagined a bereaved lover questioning the bird and receiving always the one word as answer, the earlier queries being commonplace until the lover, startled by the character of the word, its iteration, and the ominous reputation of the fowl uttering it, is excited to superstition, and wildly asks questions whose solution he has passionately at heart (whether he shall be, in the hereafter, united to his love) half in superstition, half in despair and self-torture, modelling them so as to receive from

the *expected* "Nevermore" an intolerable and delicious sorrow. Poe, then, according to his own account, began by writing the climax of the poem (*The Philosophy of Composition: Works*, ed. Stedman & Woodberry, vol. vi., pp. 31-46).

1. **Kubla Khan**, beyond the fact that he suggested this poem, is as unimportant as, otherwise than as preventing its completion, the "person from Porlock." All other names in the piece seem to be fictitious.

8. **sinuous**, winding. Lat. *sinuosus* (*sinus*, a bay), full of curves or windings.

18. **woman walling for her demon-lover**, a frequent theme of romantic legend, treated more than once in the old ballads. Sometimes the lover is a demon, sometimes one who has made a pact with the devil to win him the woman's soul, sometimes he has returned from the dead. It is impossible to say where the idea first took form; the idea of love between the human and the daemonic (or even divine) is as old as mythology or literature. The verse *Genesis*, vi. 2—"the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose"—has been interpreted of the lawless loves of the angels. The tale of Eros and Psyche, that a princess was wedded to a divinity whose form she might not behold, is founded on the same theme. In the pagan period these supernatural lovers were either good or bad; in the Christian period, when the Greek daemon (*δαίμων*, any divinity or supernatural power) became the *demon*, specifically evil, the demon-lover became a power of bale; just as the hooved forest-god, Pan, became a devil, and Venus a lure to death and damnation (see general note on Keats, *La belle dame sans mercy*). Occasionally, in this mediaeval recasting, the pagan divinity preserves its old mixed character of beneficence and malevolence; thus Proserpine, the maiden-flower of spring, also goddess of the realms of death, confused even by the Greeks with Hecate, the moon-mystery and ruler of midnight terrors, becomes queen of the fairies (Keats, iii. 36, 37), creatures kindly and harmful by turns.

"The fairy-queen Proserpina
Will send abroad her fairies every one,
That shall pinch black and blue
Your white hands and fair arms."

CAMPION *apud* A. H. BULLEN, *More Lyrics from
Song-books of the Elizabethan age*, p. 42.

19. **momently**, from moment to moment. Compare Wordsworth, *Glen of Loch Elvie*:

"Of tuneful Caves and playful Waterfalls—
Of Mountains varying momentarily their crests—
Proud be this Land."

22. **flail**, an instrument for threshing corn. Lat. *flagellum*, a whip. A flail consists of two rigid parts, united by a flexible joint, and is used like a whip.

23. **ever**, always.

25. **meandering**, following a winding course. Lat. *Maeander*, Gk. *Malarōpos*, the name of a river remarkable for its circuitous course.

37. **dulcimer** (Lat. *dulce*, Greek *melos*, sweet song), an ancient stringed instrument, which was played by striking the strings with hammers.

41. **Mount Abora** is unknown: Coleridge probably invented the name. It is used again by Coventry Patmore, *The Unknown Eros*, Book ii., Ode ii., The Contract:

“Twice thirty centuries and more ago,
All in a heavenly Abyssinian vale,
Man first met woman; and the ruddy snow
On many-ridged Abora turned pale,
And the song choked within the nightingale.”

43. **symphony**, harmonious accompaniment. Gk. *sun*, together, *phonē*, voice, sound.

51. **Weave a circle round him thrice**, the magical circle outside of which a person enclosed in it could not move. See in Tennyson's *Merlin and Vivien* the account of the charm by which Merlin was undone:

“The which if any wrought on anyone
With *woven paces* and with waving arms,
The man so wrought on ever seem'd to lie
Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower,
From which was no escape for evermore.”

The circle could be drawn by a person round himself, for his own defence, or by others round him, to prevent him doing them harm, as here.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

I. Rose Aylmer

Was the youngest daughter of the fourth Baron Aylmer. Landor, during his stay in Wales (1795-98), used to roam with her along the coast about Swansea and Tenby. It was from a book lent him by her that he took the first hint of his first important poem, *Gebir*. She shortly afterwards went to India, and died there in 1800.

1. **sceptred race, noble race.**

7. **a night of memories and sighs.** It has been remarked (I forget by whom) that this line well exemplifies the classic spirit of moderation and composure which Landor loved. Most romantic poets would have been ready with a *life-time* of memories and sighs.

II. On his seventy-fifth birthday.

Landor read these lines at breakfast on the day following his 75th birthday to Miss Eliza Lynn (afterwards Mrs. Lynn Linton), his then companion. They were prefixed to his volume, *Last Fruit*, 1853.

CHARLES LAMB.

The Old Familiar Faces.

The rhythm of this piece is a continual variation on a line of six beats, and depends for its effect on older elements of English metre, viz. long notes, rests, and pauses (see note on metre of Allan Cunningham's *Hame, hame, hame*). The basic line is the refrain:

Áll | áll | áre góne | the öld | fámíl|iar fá|cēs

there being a continual over-syllable at the end of each line. Some of the variations are:

I' | have hād | pláy|mātes || I' | have hād | compán|ions
 ín | my dāys | of child|hōōd || ín | my jóy|ful schoól|days
 Clōsed | áre | her doōrs || on mé | I múst | not seé | her
 Líke | an ín|gráte || I léft | my friend | abrápt|ly
 Why | wért | not thou || bórn | in my fá|ther's dwéll|ing
 How sóme|they|have died || and sóme|they|have léft|me.

The middle stress in each half line, i.e. the second and fifth stresses of the whole line, are lighter than the others, and may be almost neglected in speaking. A few times, however, where the sense will guide the reader, they oust the other stresses from pride of place; thus:

Drink|ing late | sitt|ing late || with | my bós|om crón|ies
 And sóme | are tá|ken from || me áll | are depárt | ed.

The first two words of the refrain, however, are always strongly accented, and it is perhaps right to read it with the six beats fully marked.

4. **carousing**, taking part in a drinking bout. *Carouse* was originally an adverb. The German adverb *garaus*, from which it is derived, signifying literally 'right out,' 'was specially used of emptying a bumper in drinking a health.'—SKEAT.

5. **bosom cronies**, intimate friends. For 'bosom' as an adjective, compare Fletcher and Rowley, *The Maid in the Mill*, ii. 2:

"I know you are his bosom counsellor."

Cronies. Originally 'crony' meant an old woman, a crone. Here, an intimate companion or associate, as in Swift, *To Janus*:

"To oblige your crony Swift,
 Bring our dame a New-year's gift."

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

The Battle of the Baltic.

Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, had, in 1801, formed a confederacy for making England resign her naval rights. The last-mentioned country was particularly friendly to France. Sir Hyde Parker, being despatched to crush this confederacy, with Nelson as second in command, engaged the Danes on March 30—April 1 near Elsinore, in the Sound, on April 2 at Copenhagen itself, the Danish fleet being supported in each case by land-batteries, the whole under the command of the Prince Royal, the "Prince of all the land." The result was a crushing defeat for Denmark; the Czar Paul died shortly after and the confederacy was broken. It was at the battle of Copenhagen that Nelson, hearing that the commander-in-chief had hoisted signal 39, to cease firing, turned his telescope towards the signal, but placed his blind eye to the lens and, not seeing the signal, continued the fight.

4. the might of Denmark's crown was never very great, and there is no *wild and stormy steep*, but a low coast, at Elsinore. Yet these things matter little; for to an English ear there is, since the writing of *Hamlet*, a peculiar prestige in the names.

5. The words **proudly shone** and the three syllables at this place in each stanza form everywhere in reality a separate line, like that at the end of the stanza.

6. **brand**, torch. Old English, *brinnan*, to burn.

10. **leviathans**, huge water-beasts. Byron has a similar comparison, *Childe Harold*, iv. 181:

"The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee" (*i.e.* of the Ocean).

Derived from Hebrew, *livyathdn*, an aquatic animal, dragon, sea-serpent; Heb. root, *lāvāh*, to cleave. See *Job*, xli. 1; *Isaiah*, xxvii. 1.

11. **bulwarks**, originally = bole-works; *i.e.* a construction of the boles or trunks of trees.

19, 20. Weak and obscure lines, a blot on this otherwise splendid poem. Do they mean "English bravery became eager to hasten on the conflict?"

21. *van.* An abbreviated form of 'vanguard.' French, *avant garde*.

fleeter, more fleetly.

24. *adamantine*, made of very hard metal; lit. 'that which is unconquerable.' Greek, *a*, privative, + *damaein*, to tame. Compare Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i. 48:

"In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire."

26. *hurricane eclipse*, when driving clouds obscure the sun.

29. *havoc*, destruction. Compare Addison, *Cato*, ii. 1:

"Ye gods! what havoc does ambition make
Among your works!"

Milton, *P. L.* ix. 28:

"Warrs, hitherto the onely Argument
Heroic deem'd, chief maistrie to dissect
With long and tedious havoc fabl'd knights
In Battels feign'd."

Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, v. 2. 375:

"This quarry cries on (i.e. accuses, shows clearly that
there has been) havoc. O proud death,
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?"

The expression *to cry Havoc* (to cry no quarter) is closest to the original sense of the word, which meant *hawk* (A.S. *hafuc*), and was a cry to encourage the hawk loosened on its prey.

32. *boom*; historic present, used for vividness of narrative. So also 'is,' and 'strike,' l. 33; and 'light,' l. 35.

66. *that*; relative pronoun, antecedent, hearts.

67. *Riou*. Edward Riou, born 1758, captain of the "Amazon" at this battle, was cut in two by a cannon-ball while engaging a battery with insufficient forces. Nelson wrote that in him the country had sustained an irreparable loss, and Parliament voted a monument to his memory in S. Paul's.

68. *sigh*, i.e. 'let sigh.'

70. *condoles*, laments.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

Battle Song.

9. **collared hound**, servile minister. 'Collared,' wearing the badge of servitude.

10. **To famine dear**, *i.e.* because these lawless hordes left famine and desolation throughout the country they traversed.

11. **Attila**, King of the Huns (a Scythian race), invaded the Roman Empire, in the reign of Valentinian, with an enormous army. He devastated the provinces, and, threatening the capital, was only bought off by payment of a large sum of money.

13. **Scythian wilds**. Scythia comprised almost the whole of the northern parts of Europe and Asia, and was to the Greeks and Romans practically an unknown land.

18. **torse**, an heraldic term, signifying a wreath. Old French, *torse*, a wreath; Latin, *torquere*, to twist.

19. **all sternly met**, an adjectival phrase, qualifying 'foot and horse.'

23. **tawdry**, gaudy, vulgarly showy. "It was first used in the phrase *tawdry lace* = a rustic necklace, explained ... as being a necklace bought at Saint Audrey's Fair, held in the Isle of Ely on St. Audrey's Day."—SKEAT. A somewhat different explanation is given in Nares' *Glossary*, but it is certain that 'tawdry' is a corruption of 'Saint Audrey.' The word is omitted in the text of 1833, which presents the evident misprint *stave*.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Hame, hame, hame, hame fain wad I be.

"Forged," says Mr. Henley, "by 'honest Allan,' who never could refuse a chance of appearing to vie with Burns in the manipulation, or even the manufacture, of traditional material." Mrs. Meynell says (*The Flower of the Mind*, p. x.): "It is to be noted that the modern, or comparatively modern, additions to old songs full of quantitative metre, full of long notes, rests, and interlinear pauses, are almost always written in anapaests. The later writer has slipped away from the fine, various, and subtle metre of the older. Assuredly the popularity of the metre which, for want of a term suiting the English rules of verse, must be called anapaestic, has done more than any other thing to vulgarize the national sense of rhythm and to silence the finer rhythms ... I would be bound to find the modern stanzas in an old song by this very habit of anapaests and this very misunderstanding of the long words and interlinear pauses of the older stanzas."

The burden of this poem is evidently traditional: its sense even, a simple lament for absence from home, has no necessary connection with the Jacobite song set round it. The metre is this:

Hāme | hāme | hāme || hāme | fāin wād | Ī bē ||

Hāme | hāme | hāme || tó | mý áin | cōuntrié ||

or, in musical notation:



whereby the long notes, pauses, and rests are more apparent. Contrast the later verses:

When the flówer | is i' | the búd || and the léaf | is on | the treé ||
The greén | leaf o' lóy | altie's || begún | for to fá' ||

lines containing only four beats. Cf. note on the metre of Lamb's *Old Familiar Faces*.

1. **fain**, gladly. As in the line attributed to Raleigh (see Scott's *Kenilworth*):

"Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall."

8. **bonie white rose.** The white rose was the badge of the Jacobites, who supported the claims of James II. and his descendants to the British throne, and for many years, especially in Scotland, resisted the authority of William III. and the House of Hanover.

17. **mirk,** dark cloud, gloom.

blinks, shines.

blythe, joyfully.

18. **yere,** your.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I. Ode to the West Wind.

4. **hectic red**, of a redness produced by decay. The metaphor is taken from the flush of ill-health upon the cheeks of a consumptive. (Gk. *hektikos*, consumptive.)

9. **Thine azure sister**, the light western breeze of spring, blowing under a clear blue sky.

21. **Maenad**, Greek *Mainas* (*mainomai*, to rage), a female worshipper of Bacchus. (See note on Keats, iii. 32). The Maenad is "fierce," having abandoned herself entirely to the ecstasy, half-animal, half-spiritual, which Bacchus inspired.

22. **zenith**, the point of the heavens immediately overhead. A word of Arabic origin.

30. Observe the accent thrown forward in the second foot.

31. **coll**, slow-eddying motion.

crystalline, the accent is on the penultimate. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vi. 772,

"He on the wings of cherub rode sublime,
On the crystalline sky."

32. **pumice** is lava from which large quantities of gas or steam have escaped while it was cooling and hardening; it has a spongy or cellular texture.

Balae's bay, on the coast of Italy, between Ostia and Naples. Baiae was a favourite sea-side resort of the ancient Romans. See Keats, *Fragment of Ode to Maia*, 3.

40-42. "The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it."—SHELLEY.

43. **If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear**. Note the omission of the relative pronoun. This construction is common where the sense is obvious. Cf. Shakespeare, *Richard II.* ii. 2. 128,

"The hate of those love not the king."

62. **me**. Shelley often mocks at grammar. The construction "It's me" has sometimes been defended on the analogy of the French *C'est moi*.

64. **quicken**, vivify, bring to life. O.E. *cwic*, alive. Cf. *Book of Common Prayer*, "The quick and the dead," and Browning, *By the Fireside*,

"How a sound shall quicken content to bliss."

65. **incantation**, chanting. Latin *cantare* (frequentative from *canere*, to sing), to sing again and again, so to sing as a magical charm, in which the iterated burden or refrain was a striking feature.

II. To Night.

13. **opiate**, producing sleep. Greek *opion*, the juice of the poppy, whence *opium*. Compare Milton, *Paradise Lost*, xi. 133,

"Hermes or his opiate rod."

Cf. Keats, iii. 3:

"Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains."

Ode to a Nightingale, line 3.

22. Observe the omission of an unaccented syllable between *Death* and *câme*, and the slow movement of the last two stanzas obtained by an iambic rhythm.

23. **Wouldst thou me**, dost thou wish for me.

III. To —.

4. **quicken**. See note on i. 64.

IV. Song: Rarely, rarely comest thou.

25. A light stress on the last syllable of *lovest*. Cf. *To Jane: The Recollection*:

"We wandered to the Pine Forést
That skirts the ocean's foam,
The lightest wind was in its nest."

V. A Lament.

3. **that**, i.e. that step.

8. Does not exactly correspond to 3. Perhaps both *fresh* and *spring* bear accents; the double pause in the line and the extra unaccented syllable give it a music *equivalent* to that of 3.

VI. Song: A widow bird.

From the unfinished drama of *Charles the First*, Scene v.

VII. From Adonais: an Elegy on the Death of John Keats.

Shelley, in his preface to this poem, gives form to the myth concerning Keats' death: "The savage criticism on his *Endymion*, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, produced the most violent effect on his sensitive mind; the agitation thus

originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs ; a rapid consumption ensued " : and thus in the poem, stanza 36 :

" Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh !

What deaf and viperous murderer could crown

Life's early cup with such a draught of woe ?"

The name Adonais is a feigned name, in imitation of the Greek, like that of Lycidas under which Milton celebrated his dead friend, Edward King. The first thirty-eight stanzas are here omitted ; they bring around Keats' grave a train of allegorical figures, and with them Byron and Shelley. But with the thirty-ninth stanza, after this hint in the thirty-eighth,

" the pure spirit shall flow

Back to the burning fountain whence it came,

A portion of the Eternal,"

a mightier inspiration descends on the poet, and he gives form, in verse that has become the classic English expression thereof, to the Platonic imagination of a spirit of beauty that works in the world, compelling each thing to nobler form, a spirit from which each individual soul is descended. Great poets have often written at their finest when dealing with the Poet's special destiny (as Shelley again in *Alastor*) : perhaps they then give us other mortals the illusion that the Poet's destiny is the highest symbol of our own. In these stanzas, sometimes obscure, one feels that the surface-logic of phrases and images matters little : that they are borne on a great wind, a mighty uplifting of something beyond our ordinary psychological life, a mood of some eternal imagination.

2. *dream of life*. A favourite thought with the Platonists. Plato himself had compared all that we know and feel in this world to shadows seen by men bound in a dark cave, the real light that casts them being invisible.

7. *charnel*, a house or vault where dead bodies are placed. Latin, *caro* (gen. *carnis*), flesh. The word is generally used as an adjective in combination with 'house,' but we find in Mid. Eng. *charnelle* as a substantive (= charnel house). Cf. Maundeville : " Under the cloystre of the chirche . . . is the charnel of the Innocentes."

18. *urn*, a vessel used to contain the ashes of the cremated dead. Derived, probably, from Latin, *urere*, to burn.

21. Stanza xiv.,

" Morning sought

Her eastern watch tower, and her hair unbound,

Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,

Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day."

But now the dew shall no longer be the tears of dawn for

Adonais' death, but a pure splendour of light like the "white radiance of eternity" into which he has passed.

35. "Even in his most anti-theistic poem, *Queen Mab*, Shelley said in a note, 'The hypothesis of a pervading Spirit, co-eternal with the universe, remains unshaken.'"—W. M. Rossetti.

36. **Sustains it from beneath**, holds the material universe together. Cf. for the expression, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (*Deuteronomy*, xxxiii. 27). and **kindles it above**, i.e. lights the fire of soul in its highest manifestations.

39. **plastic stress**, shaping power; *plastic*, active (Greek, *plastō*, to shape), "plastic art" often used for sculpture and kindred arts. The meaning of these words is made plainer in the two following lines.

41. **successions**, things succeeding or following one another. Abstract for concrete.

42. **dross**, the slag or refuse of ore after the precious metal has been melted out; then, anything worthless. Here the whole material world, which is so much inferior mass, to be melted and transformed by the great Spirit fire.

43. **as each mass may bear**, in so far as that likeness can be impressed upon each crude portion of reluctant matter.

50. General sense: the illustrious dead live again as inspirations (winds of light) in every young heart which lofty thought and love (the universal love) strive to lift out of life (life, as nearly always in Shelley, the meaner residue of existence).

54. **winds of light** scattering the darkness and storm. "The Greeks called a *strong* wind 'bright'."—A. Sidgwick on Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1180.

55. **The inheritors of unfulfilled renown**. The meaning is: Those whose early death cut them off from the fulfilment of the fame which their genius seemed to promise.

57. **the unapparent**. There are some who would forbid such abstract language to a poet. Thus Mr. Watts-Dunton condemns these lines of George Eliot:

"Speech is but broken light upon the depth
Of the unspoken; even your loved words
Float in the larger meaning of your voice
As something dimmer":

on the ground that "such an abstract phrase as *the unspoken* belongs entirely to prose." This passage of Shelley requires no defence.

Chatterton. Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770) was the son of a schoolmaster of Bristol. His genius for antiquarian study

and poetic expression showed itself while he was yet a child. At a very early age he eagerly studied and imitated mediæval manuscripts which he had found in the Muniment Room of the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, and when he was only ten he was contributing verses to the local journals. In 1764 he began to forge a series of pseudo-archaic poems, most of which he ascribed to Thomas Rowley, an imaginary priest of the fifteenth century. In April, 1770, he went to London, hoping to gain fame and fortune. Four months later he committed suicide to avoid the more lingering pangs of starvation.

His poems, wonderful when we consider them as the works of an inexperienced child, are not intrinsically of very great literary value. Still many men of genius—perhaps partially blinded by the glamour of his romantic career—have regarded him with an admiration which can only be called extravagant. Keats dedicated *Endymion* to his memory; Wordsworth refers to him, justly enough, as

“ the marvellous boy,
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride ”;

Coleridge wrote a Monody on the death of the “sweet Harper of time-shrouded Minstrelsy”; Rossetti spoke of him in terms of ardent praise; the French poet, Alfred de Vigny, wrote both a tale and a drama on the subject of his fate.

(For a detailed account of his life and a discussion of his poetry, see Masson's *Chatterton, a Story of the Year 1770*; or the Aldine edition of *Chatterton's Poetical Works*.)

59. **Sidney.** Sir Philip Sidney, the son of a leading statesman of Queen Mary's court, was born at Penshurst in 1554. He was early noted for sweetness of disposition, precocity of learning, and gravity of demeanour. After three years of travel on the continent (1572–1575), he entered the court of Queen Elizabeth, where, however, his honesty counteracted, or at least hampered, his genius for statesmanship. In 1586 he took part in a campaign against the Spaniards in the Netherlands. On September 22nd he was wounded before the walls of Zutphen. He reached the camp, faint and thirsty from loss of blood, and called for something to drink. A bottle of water was brought him; but as he was placing it to his lips, he saw a soldier, who had been mortally wounded, casting a greedy glance at the flask as he was carried past. Without drinking, Sidney handed it to the man, saying: “Thy necessity is greater than mine.” He lingered for twenty-five days at Arnheim, and on the 17th of October he died. All England went into mourning for the young hero, and the poets of the day vied in writing elegies on his untimely death.

His chief literary works are (1) *Astrophel and Stella*, a series of sonnets and lyrics celebrating his love of Penelope Devereux,

Lady Rich; (2) *A Defence of Poesie*, a fine essay in literary criticism; and (3) *Arcadia*, a dream-like pastoral romance.

His fame is hardly justified by his achievements; we must look for the cause of it rather in the conduct of his life—the expression of his character in *behaviour*. He was a man of magnificent unfulfilled possibilities—as statesman, warrior, and poet. In his person was concentrated almost all that was best in the tendencies of his day, but he left no great permanent record of the forces that were within him. The main thing that strikes us in his character is its perfect balance of merit—the rounded wholeness of his nature. Not only was he, in the eyes of his contemporaries,

“The courtier’s, scholar’s, soldier’s eye, tongue, sword,
The expectancy and rose of the fair State,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers,”

but he remains for us and for all time the standing model of an English gentleman.

62. **Lucan.** M. Annaeus Lucanus, a Roman poet, author of the *Pharsalia*, an epic on the civil wars of Caesar and Pompeius. He lived under Nero and his reputation as a poet excited the jealousy of that imperial dilettante, who, not content with fingering the fine arts of misrule and murder, aspired to the laurels. Lucan, being forbidden to recite in public, and thereby driven to find some other rhetorical vent for his republican sentiments, joined a conspiracy against his rival; which being detected, he betrayed his fellow-conspirators and first of all his mother, on the promise of pardon. This was, rightly, not kept, and Lucan was forced to die, in A.D. 65, at the age of 26. Neither his poetical achievement nor his character justifies his mention here.

69. There is a general reference to the music of the Spheres. According to old astronomers the earth was surrounded by seven transparent involved spheres on which the constellations were fixed, moving with them. As all law is harmony, the movement of these spheres produced a music, inaudible to our gross ears. Thus Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, v. 1. 60:

“There’s not the smallest orb which thou behold’st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.”

Each poet rules a sphere, in Shelley’s imagination, and Keats’ sphere remained unilluminated and songless until he ascended it.

72. *wingéd throne*, the sphere? There was perhaps in Shelley's mind, as often happens with the poets in this matter, a confusion, due to the word *sphere*, between the old conception of the seven hollow spheres of heaven and the modern conception of all the stars as separate spheres.

Vesper, the Evening Star. Latin, *Vesper*; Greek, *Hesperus*, the evening, the evening-star.

73-81. A stanza of no strict logic. This general sense may be extracted from it: Whoever mourns for Keats is too much shut up in his narrow human grief and measures the poet by his own limitations. Let him then, in order to know aright what he is and "what Adonais is" and the difference between them, contemplate that vast universe which the poet's spirit could embrace and then again himself, an infinitesimal point within our point of time. So shall he learn to regard the poet and his death aright.

74. *Fond wretch*, foolish, doting, grieving creature.

78. *Satiate*, completely fill.

80, 81. Obscure lines: I offer a tentative explanation. The mourner rises from out his narrow grief to glimpses (hopes) of the "splendid dooms of the mighty dead"; one hope after another leads him "to the brink" where he beholds the full splendour of the immortal life. But this, being too great for his weak humanity, is likely to appal him.

82. *Rome*. Shelley says Keats "was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the Protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and towers, now mouldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place."

85. Shelley always, even in this hour of poetic rapture, sees only the dark side which must perforce belong to anything human.

101. *hoary brand*, a smouldering brand, half-reduced to white ashes which cover the fire.

102. *pyramid*, over the tomb of Caius Cestius. See note on line 82.

103. *Pavilioning*, covering as with a pavilion or tent. Fr. *pavillon*, a tent—so called because spread out like the wings of a butterfly; Lat. *papilio*, a butterfly. For the use of the verb, compare Shakespeare, *Henry V.* i. 2. 129:

"Whose hearts have left their bodies here in England,
And lie pavilion'd in the fields of France."

105. **flame transformed to marble.** These words describe not merely the pyramid, pointed like a flame, but also the ideal work of art, a living burning passion persistent in a form more durable than marble or brass.

106. **newer band.** The cemetery had only lately been made.

111. Inquire not into the private grief arising, as from a fountain, from any one of these graves (Shelley's son was buried here): you, like any other man, have enough thereof in your own home. Rather let the shadow of the tomb and the loveliness of this spot (see note on 82) teach you that death is not to be feared, being the gate of escape from this wretched life into rest and joy.

118. **The One, the Eternal Spirit: Platonic.**

119. **shadows:** see note on line 2. That Platonic thought is expressed in the following three lines by an image that is perhaps more famous than any other in the language.

124. Only Death reveals the Eternal, the coloured shows of life but obscure it. From Rome's azure sky and the flowers, ruins and statues that are around him (but might be found elsewhere) the poet passes to more general statement of the modes of expression, music, language, and poetry; the surrounding sights suggest a transition from the *expressive* beauty of nature (sky, flowers) to that of art.

126. **transfuse**, to cause to be imparted, here said of the *medium* of transfusion or transmission. Milton, *P. L.* iii. 389, of the transmission of the Divine Father's power to the Son:

"*Transfus'd* on thee his ample Spirit rests."

127-135. To Shelley, who knows that life really but conceals the Eternal, the end of his aspirations, life can offer no hope.

131, 132. Compare what was said in the introduction concerning Shelley's *Epipsychidion* and the revulsions of feeling he was apt to experience with regard to individuals.

135. There is perhaps intentional reference, by contrast, to the words "until death us do part," and the others, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (*8. Mark* x. 9).

137. Cf. "in Him we live, and move, and have our being" (*Acts* xvii. 28).

138. **the eclipsing curse of birth.** Cf. for similar thought but more restrained language Wordsworth's *Ode*, *passim*.

140. **the web of being** is, I suppose, the fleshly material life; the *mirror* (142) being the soul.

142. **are** should be *is*, *mirrors* consequently should be *mirror*.

143. **beams** is the principal verb of the sentence.

144. *clouds*; cf. *web*, 140.

145. *breath*, the words denoting *soul*, *spirit*, are nearly always words originally denoting *breath* or *air*. Inspiration is a "breathing-upon."

145-153. The poet, voyaging towards the Eternal, whither the soul of his brother-poet pilots him, is borne across fearful seas unsailed by the timorous throng of men. Yet though his voyage is through darkness, at times the heights and deeps are opened, giving him glimpses of the Eternal that are denied to others.

149. *sphered skies*: see notes on 69, 72. The old conception of the seven spheres dominates here.

JOHN KEATS.

I. Narcissus.

According to the Greek fable, the nymph Echo became enamoured of the beautiful youth Narcissus, who being unwilling to return her love, she died of grief. He was punished for his cruelty thus, that beholding his own image in a stream, he fell in love with it and pined away as she had done. Echo is a personification of the sound whose name she bears, being a creature devoid of self-sufficiency and dependent on another's personality, as the echo cannot exist except as effect of some other sound: Narcissus is the type of the self-absorbed and the tale is the dramatic opposition of the two types. On the spot where Narcissus died sprang up the flower that bears his name, the root of which is the same as that of the word *narcotic*. Since it was by the lure of this flower that Hades, the god of death, gained possession of Persephone, the maiden daughter of Earth, we may see in the legend of Narcissus a further meaning: the soul, if it yield to the delight of absorption in its own essential beauty, is led away from life and its beauty becomes a flower of malady and death.

This piece, the only one included in this book on other grounds than those of pure poetical merit, is here given as an example of the instinct which led Keats, at the very beginning of his career, to go behind the myths to the natural fact underlying them. The style is that of his early period, containing many faults, over-lusciousness, as the use of "delicious" where even "delightful" would have been too much, and comical associations of words, as "serenely peeping," for the mere rhyme's sake.

1. *bard*, see note on Blake, i. 14.
sing, celebrate in song. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Regained*,
- i. 2, "Now sing recover'd Paradise to all."
6. *cool*, coolness.
8. *tendril*. A noun used as an adjective.
10. *forlorn*, utterly lost, desolate. 'For-' as a prefix has an intensive force; 'lorn' is the past participle of Old Eng. *leosan*, to lose.
11. *watery clearness*, an abstract term for "clear water"; Keats elsewhere has "the quaint mossiness of aged roots"; *Hyperion*, i. 1, "the shady sadness of a vale." Mr. Colvin

points out that he took this locution from Chapman (1559-1634), particularly from one poem of Chapman's, his translation of the Homeric *Hymn to Pan*, where we find a parallel expression, "wat'ry softnesses." Modern French prose and verse have made large use of this means of adding a spiritual touch to natural description.

12. This beautiful line expresses the very essence of the myth.

13. *Zephyrus* (Greek), the western wind and its ruling divinity; since the western is generally "soft and low," as here "light." "Zephyr" in English is any gentle breeze.

18. *bale*, destruction, misfortune. Old Eng. *balu*, *bealu*, mis-chief, destruction. Compare Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, i. 1. 166:

"Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;
The one side must have bale."

II. Hymn to Pan (from *Endymion*, Book i.).

Pan was a sylvan and rustic god, half human, half bestial, with goat's feet, lord of a tribe of similarly-shaped deities, the *Fauns* and *Satyrs*. He was born in Arcadia, the land of the golden age of pastoral happiness, of the nymph Dryope. He is the god of generous pastoral life: then, also, the spirit haunting the lonely places of nature, the secrets of the forests, his "enmossed realms," rocky places inland or on the sea-shore. Here, at noon, his terrible shout would drive away the lonely wanderer in terror (whence the word *panic*): for in hot countries, at noon, when all life is hushed, the sense of a brooding mystery in the woods or mountains oppresses the wayfarer more strongly than at other times, the silence is as dreadful as a great shout or a thunderclap, and day is as awful as night.

Pan loved the nymph *Syrinx*, daughter of the river Ladon in Arcadia; she, flying from his pursuit, leaped into the river and was changed into reeds, whereof Pan cutting some of various lengths arranged them into the musical instrument still known as Pan-pipes. This is probably a fable of the origin of music from the wind among the reeds, since *syrinx* in Greek denotes a reed and the name Pan is said to be akin to words denoting "breath," "wind": observe that he is the spirit of sudden moaning breezes:

"Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,
That come a-swooning over hollow grounds,
And wither drearily on barren moors."

Since Pan was the god of a general life in rustic nature, and since in Greek another word *pan* (all) was used to denote the Universe, by a natural confusion, he became the universal life, the general divinity from which all others were derived. His mysterious aspect, as the spirit of solitude, also helped to make

of him a "symbol of immensity." So it is told that when Paganism was finally conquered by Christianity, certain mariners in the Mediterranean heard towards evening from a lonely isle cries of lamentation, followed by the words, "Go and tell the peoples, *Great Pan is dead*."

Keats has with consummate art and intellect harmonized all aspects of the legend. Beginning with the woodland loneliness of Pan (stanza 1), he passes to his rustic and pastoral character, his friendliness (stanzas 2, 3, beginning of stanza 4), thence to his mysterious and symbolic aspect of universal divinity (stanzas 4, 5).

1. The **palace roof** of Pan is formed by the tangled forest-boughs which *hang from jagged trunks*. Observe how finely the mysterious beauty of his realm is imaged by *unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness* (l. 4).

Compare Swinburne, *The Palace of Pan* :

"Mute worship, too fervent for praise or for prayer,
Possesses the spirit with peace,
Fulfilled with the breath of the luminous air,
The fragrance, the silence, the shadows as fair
As the rays that recede or increase.

"Ridged pillars that redden aloft and aloof,
With never a branch for a nest,
Sustain the sublime indivisible roof,
To the storm and the sun in his majesty proof,
And awful as waters at rest."

5. **Hamadryads**. As the Fauns and Satyrs (l. 32) are incarnations of the strange animal life of the woods, so the green life of the trees found embodiment in tree-nymphs, Dryads (Greek, *druas* from *drus*, an oak or any timber tree) or *Hamadryads* (Greek, *hama*, together with, and *drus*)—because their life ended with that of the tree to which each one of them belonged.

7. **hearken**, used without the preposition *to*, like *listen* (*Endymion*, Book iii., "*listen their melodies*"); this usage is confined to poetry. Compare Morris, *Earthly Paradise*, ii. 275 :

"He sat, with eager face hearkening each word,
Nor speaking aught."

8. **reeds**, see above on *Syrinx* (l. 12).

9. **dank**, moist, clammy. The word is not another form of 'damp,' but, being of Scandinavian origin, it is rather to be associated with Swedish, *dagg*, dew, and indeed it seems to be nothing else than a nasalized form of the Provincial Eng. *dag*, dew. Cf. Poe ii. 8.

10. **pipy**. Keats loves adjectives ending in *y*, *surgy*, *nervy*, *liny* *marble*, *sceptry hand*. Adjectives of this form, all derived from substantives and referring generally to the principal constituent

(Milton, *P. L.* iii. 439, *cany* waggons light), or at least to the most striking characteristic of the thing to which they are applied, were more common once than now. Keats certainly runs to excess in their use, but that was a fault of his time. Bowles, in those sonnets which influenced Coleridge, seems to have used them profusely, so that Coleridge afterwards, in a parody of Bowles' style, speaks of "the *dampy* grass."

14. **the trembling mazes that she ran**, in her flight from Pan's eager wooing. Observe the loaded significance of the phrase: Syrinx, *trembling* with fear, ran wildly, without aim, in *mazes*.

16. **turtles**, turtle-doves. Compare *Song of Solomon*, ii. 12: "The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

17. **Passion their voices**, give voice to their passion, utter an impassioned song. Compare Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, v. 1. 24:

"And shall not myself,

One of their kind, that relish all as sharply,

Passion as they, be kindlier moved than thou art?"

Keats, outside of his archaistic tendencies, which were small, was a splendid creator of imaginative language. Cf., from *Endymion*, this:

"Twas a lay

More subtly cadenced, *more forest wild*

Than Dryope's lone lulling of her child."

18. How beautiful, this vision of Pan wandering outside his forest realms into pastoral land when the cool mystery of the twilight is near.

20. **enmossed**, bemossed. The prefix *en* merely strengthens the force of the verb.

22. **girted**, girded. This is a common Elizabethan form. So Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, 846, "What sieges girt me round." So also 'rent' was used where we should say 'rend.'

23. **leas**, meadows.

24. **poppied corn**. The red poppy flourishes in wheat or corn-fields.

27. **pent-up**, yet in the cocoon, as the young linnets in the egg.

29. **completions**, the fulfilment of the promise of spring. The word is here of four syllables according to the older scansion, whereby even *ocean* was lengthened to three. Cf. Shakespeare, *Othello*, ii. 3. 145:

"It were an honest action to say so";

and *The Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 8:

"Your mind is tossing on the ocean."

31. **O forester divine**. This stanza and the next end in lines

which sum up essential aspects of the god, the bulk of each stanza consisting of detail which the final lines explain.

34. **squatted**, seated in a crouching attitude.

35. **upward**, here preposition. The suffix *ward* denotes direction, thus *toward*, *towards* are amplifications of *to*: on their analogy *upward* is here used. The suffix can be attached to pronouns, as to *me-ward*, *to us-ward*; cf. *heavenward*, *Godward*.

36. Here is expressed the friendliness of Pan to peaceful animal life, and in the following two lines the friendliness of this dreadful woodland power towards those who are friendly to such life.

maw, stomach. Old Eng. *maga*.

39. **main**, the high sea, the expanse of the ocean.

41. **Naiads**, water-nymphs of the sea and rivers.

44. **they pelt**, namely, the Fauns and Satyrs.

45. An accent is here thrown forward to the first syllable of *apples*:

When silv|ery oak | ápples | and fir | cones brówn.

The accent on *oak* is weak.

49. **peers**, companions; properly 'equals.' Lat. *par*, equal.

51. Wild boars were hunted because they broke into the fields and rooted up the crops.

"*Ceres* was binding garlands for god *Pan*, . . .
with which she crown'd

His forked browes, and woo'd him with his horne
To rouse the skipping Satyrs, to goe hunt
A herd of swine that rooted up her corne."

—THOMAS HEYWOOD, *Love's Mistress*, Act i, Scene 1.

rooting, turning up with the snout. *Rout* is a variant of *root*.

53. **weather harms**, misfortunes caused by weather, e.g. effects of drought, excessive rains, etc.

54. **Ministrant**, one who ministers, dispenser. Lat. *ministrare*.

55. **a-swooning**, used in its original sense of 'sighing.' Old Eng. *swogan*, to sigh.

59. **Dryope**, three syllables. See Introductory Note.

62. Here Keats touches the secret of the higher aspect of the Pan-myth. This god is, beyond all Satyr-kinship or forest divinity, a mysterious inconceivable spiritual presence, pervading all, not to be grasped by thought but the goal or "lodge" of all highest imaginings, attracting to itself the human spirit and leading it onward. The prayer is that the god may remain unknown in his essence, thus leaving room for infinite advance

of the soul; a symbol, a source of cosmic emotion such as the sight of the stars inspires. All the images and expressions of this stanza are wonderfully exact; there is no vagueness.

64. *bourne*, limit. French *borne*, Old French *bodne*, Middle Latin *bodina*.

72. *uplift*, for 'uplifted.' Among the Elizabethans, past participles of verbs ending in *-d* and *-t* were often thus contracted.

73. a shout most heaven-rending, the one weakness in this admirable poem.

74. *Paeon*, a hymn; properly a hymn in honour of Apollo, addressed as *Παῖδν*, the healer and saviour from evil; so any choral song.

75. *Mount Lycean*. Mount Lycaeus was a mountain of Arcadia sacred to Pan, whose festivals—called *Lycaea*—were there celebrated. See note on Blake, i. 1.

III. To a Nightingale.

The subject of this ode is, not the nightingale, but the aspiration towards a life of beauty away from the oppressing world. The song of the bird seems to sound out of a region of romance and legend where the bird lives on eternally. The poet would join her and seeking for some aid to his imagination, something to close his senses against the outer world, he at first chooses wine (stanza 2), but later (stanza 4) rejects it for the purer incantation of poetry. The treatment of the poem is consistently romantic.

STANZA 1.

The spell cast on the poet by the bird's song.

2. *hemlock*, a poisonous plant.

3. *opiate*; see note on Shelley, ii. 13.

4. *Lethe-wards*; see note on ii. 35. *Lethe*, in ancient myth, was one of the six rivers of Hades. The shades of the dead drank of its waters and forgot the past. *Lethe*, in Greek, means oblivion. So Milton (*Paradise Lost*, ii. 583) speaks of "*Lethe*, the river of Oblivion."

7. *Dryad*; see note on ii. 3.

8. *melodious*, because of the bird's strain.

9. *beechen*, consisting of the foliage of the beech tree.

STANZA 2.

Desire for wine.

13. *Flora*, the goddess of flowers.

14. *Provençal*, adjective from Provence, the southern portion of France along the Mediterranean. The name was derived from

the Latin *provincia*, a province: being the original Roman province in Gaul it was at first called "The Gallic Province," then quite simply "The Province." It was a wine-producing district, and more particularly the birth-place of French poetry.

15. *beaker*, cup, goblet. Greek, *bikos*, an earthen wine-vessel.

16. *Hippocrene* (Greek), the fountain of the horse. It sprang where the hoof of the winged horse Pegasus, the symbol of poetic inspiration, struck earth, and was guarded by the nine Muses. It was thus the stream of poetry here on earth. Wine is here that fountain, since the poet looks to it for inspiration.

17. *winking* well expresses the rapid appearance and vanishing of the bubbles.

20. *the forest dim*, especially by moonlight, has always been the favourite region of romance. One might compare and contrast the rude deities that peopled the Greek forest (see notes on II.), and the more spiritualized moonshiny creatures, the fays, which the mediaeval imagination set in their place: though even the romantic forest guards its horrors. See note on Coleridge, i. 16 (*Proserpina*).

STANZA 3.

The woes of the world: more particularly the fading of beauty and of the feelings it inspires. Cf. introduction to Poe.

23. *fret*, doom, destiny. "The fret is on me," said an Irish peasant, who was grown old and sorrowfully remembered his youth (W. B. Yeats, *Celtic Twilight*, p. 24).

25. *palsy*, the weakness of old age.

STANZAS 4, 5.

Flight from the world by help of imagination: the beauty of the romantic forest into which the poet's spirit passes.

32. *Bacchus*, god of the vine and of wine, hence of all the ecstatic and orgiastic forces that carry man out of himself into communion with the wilder, fiercer powers of life. This communion was symbolized by the god's devotees riding on leopards (*pards*) and panthers, which beasts also drew his chariot.

33. *viewless*, invisible. Compare Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, iii. 1. 124:

"To be imprison'd in the viewless winds."

37. *Clustered around*. From the construction "The Fays cluster around the moon" is formed the passive "The moon is clustered around by the Fays." Though hardly logical, it is quite correct, by usage. Milton, *P. L.* ix. 103:

"Terrestrial Heav'n, danc't round by other Heav'ns."

R. L. Stevenson writes of "a stagnant pool, *float*ed upon by the

heads of alligators." To cluster around = to surround ; clustered around = surrounded.

37. *Fays*, fairies (French, *fée*, from Latin, *fata*, originally the decrees of divinity, hence divinities, gods ; cf. *Fata Morgana*, a deceiving spirit of mirage). For these creatures of moonlight haunting the forest, see note on l. 20. As the moon (Proserpina : see note on Coleridge, i. 16) was their controlling power, their name is here applied to the stars which cluster around the moon, as court-ladies around a queen.

42. *incense* (Latin, *incendo*, to burn), properly the perfume of burnt gum, hence any perfume. The epithet *soft*, belonging to the flower, is transferred to its scent.

43. *embalmed*, used in its primitive meaning, scented (Latin, *balsamum*, the fragrant gum of the balsam tree : Hebrew, *bāsām* (balm) and *besem*, a sweet smell). The Egyptian method of preserving bodies was designated by this term, since scented oils were employed therein.

46. *eglantine*, sweet brier.

50. The sound echoes the sense, the *m*'s, *n*'s, and *s*'s giving the sibilant hum of the swarming insects. Compare Tennyson :

"The lime, a summer home of murmurous wings."

STANZA 6.

The bird's song inspires a longing for a fuller deliverance from life, that by death.

51. *Darkling*, in the dark. Properly an adverb, but sometimes used as an adjective by poets. Compare Shakespeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 2. 86 :

"O wilt thou darkling leave me? Do not so."

53. *mused rhyme*, as in Latin, a meditated song. See note on Arnold, i. 6.

54. *take into the air*, receive back into the air whence it came.

55. *rich*, a "luxury," as Keats in his early manner would have said, a perfect bliss.

56. *cease upon the midnight*, to breathe one's last breath into the nightly air, to pour forth one's soul into the night of death as the bird is pouring its soul forth in song.

60. *requiem*, a chant for the dead ; accusative case of the Latin *requies*, rest, the first word of the Office for the Dead, *Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine* : Give them eternal rest, O Lord.

STANZA 7.

The immortality of the bird as the living voice of romance, in contradistinction to the mortality of the poet : the world of romance, suggested by the bird's song.

62. hungry generations, ages which devour mankind.
 64. clown, peasant, person of low degree. A word of Scandinavian origin.
 66. Ruth. Keats adds to the Biblical story the romantic touch which it suggests.
 67. alien corn. The fields of Boaz, far from Ruth's Moabite home.
 68-70. These three lines condense the whole world of romantic imagination. *perilous*, a frequent epithet in mediaeval romances, as *The Siege Perilous*, the place of dangerous adventure.

STANZA 8.

The lapse back into common life. Observe how artfully the transition is conducted by means of the one word, *forlorn*.

72. In *Endymion*, Book ii., Keats has this line:

"The journey homeward to habitual self."

74. elf, a kind of fairy, a sprite. Old English, *ælf*.

IV. Voices of the Gods.

Hyperion: a poem of which Keats finished two books and wrote part of a third, then recast into a form less fine than the first. The subject is the war of the earlier dynasty of earth-born Titans with the later Olympian gods (see note on Matthew Arnold, *Songs of Callicles*, III.), more particularly the dethronement of the sun-god Hyperion by Apollo, the god not merely of the sun, but of song. How Keats understood this myth, as typical of the spirit ascending from conception to higher conception, attracted by the abstract idea of Beauty, 'its unimaginable lodge' (as Pan is), has been mentioned in the special introduction to his poems, and is made clear by the speech of Oceanus, here quoted, the central passage of the poem as it now stands. It is noteworthy that what is told of Apollo in the unfinished third book is a description of the poetic spirit struggling to life in him. The dethronement of Hyperion then would be the supplanting of mere might by imagination and beauty.

The treatment is severer than in *Endymion*, Keats having come under the influence of Milton, whom indeed he here frequently imitates. But it is idle to interpret in any strict sense Shelley's answer, when asked how it was that Keats, who "had no Greek," could handle Greek themes so exquisitely. "Because he was a Greek," said Shelley, meaning probably just this, that Keats was akin to the Greeks by poetic genius, which makes all ages kin. In what particular way he was akin to them I have attempted to show, when examining his claims to be considered an intellectual poet. But the treatment of *Hyperion* is,

outside the classical logic of construction, which is common to all good art, thoroughly romantic. He "fills every rift with ore," pushing his images and words to the utmost of suggestiveness, as in those descriptions of the voices of the Titans, which I here quote for their singular beauty, beside the actual speech of the wisest among these speakers, the most significant fragment of

"that large utterance of the early gods."

2. **senators**, members of the senate or highest deliberative body at Rome. The legendary dignity of the senators is well illustrated by the story that the Gauls who had invaded Rome, coming upon the Senate, which had remained calmly seated in its hall, were at first awestruck, thinking it to be an assembly of gods. Derivation, Latin, *senator*, same root as *senex*, an old man, an elder. The aged are naturally supposed to be endowed with wisdom, though there have always been dissentients from this opinion; the senators of Sparta were called *Gerontes*, or old men. On the romantic nature of this passage Mr. Colvin well observes (*Life of Keats*, p. 155): "Not to the simplicity of the Greek, but to the complexity of the modern, sentiment of nature, it belongs to try and express, by such a concourse of metaphors and epithets, every effect at once, to the most fugitive, which a forest scene by starlight can have upon the mind; the pre-eminence of oaks among the other trees—their aspect of human venerableness, their verdure, unseen in the darkness—the sense of their preternatural stillness and suspended life (branch-~~charmed~~ by the earnest stars) in an atmosphere that seems to vibrate with mysterious influences communicated between earth and sky." A Greek poet has not been born in England, and Keats lacked the knowledge of Greek necessary in order to learn a Greek style—which he did not require.

3. **branch-charmed**, with branches made still by magic.

6. Note the fine use of the simple verb *comes*; as elsewhere in that poem from which the *Narcissus* extract has been taken:

"the moon lifting her silver rim
Above a cloud, and with a gradual swim
Coming into the blue with all her light."

14. **pomp**, Greek, *pompe*, a procession: hence anything splendid and then, as here, splendour, magnificence.

17. **ceasing here**, namely, *it* (the noise among immortals) *ceasing here*, nominative absolute. The omission of the pronoun is an imitation of Milton's manner of treating English as if it were Latin, where the inflexions of verbs leave no doubt as to the person. Thus, *Par. Reg.* i. 85,

"in Him *am* pleased."

Or *ceasing* might be constructed with *therefrom*, from it, *ex quo cessante*. A similar Miltonism is the omission of the article before *organ* (l. 11).

18. **Saturn**, king of the elder gods, father of Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, who dethroned him and divided his empire. To the Greeks he was known as Kronos, and seemed a gloomy, fierce divinity, the devourer of his children. His name being like the Greek word for time, Chronos, some have seen in the myth a symbol of the action of time, which devours all that it brings forth. The name Saturn, transferred to Kronos when he was brought into Latin poetry, belongs to another deity, a creature of pure Italian myth, who was fabled to have reigned on earth as a simple king during the mild golden age of pastoral felicity.

21. An instance of Keats' invention in language, already mentioned. **Vibrating silverly**, with a thin, delicate receding tremor as of almost invisible harp-strings. These words make the air almost visible.

22. **Oceanus**, the ocean-god, wisest of the Titans, excepting Prometheus, not mentioned here, and more prudent than even he was.

23. **Sophist**, Greek, *sophistes*, from *sophos*, wise: here to be taken in the good sense. The word was used in Greece to distinguish the logic-chopper from the true philosopher, and now means one who uses specious arguments devoid of truth (see note on Arnold, vi. 1).

Athenian grove The philosophers of Athens were accustomed to teach their disciples in the open air, in gardens and groves. Hence the names Peripatetic (Greek, *peripatein*, to walk about), because Aristotle imparted his lore while strolling with his pupils; Academy, Academic, because Plato taught in the groves of the Academus or sporting-ground of the Athenian youth. Cf. Milton, *Par. Reg.* 244:

" See there the Olive Grove of *Academe*,
Plato's retirement " ;

and 277 :

" Mellifluous streams that water'd all the schools
 Of Academics old and new, 'with those
 Sirnam'd *Peripatetics*."

25. **oozy**, the slime of the sea-bottom is called ooze.

26. **first-endeavouring**, in its earliest endeavours. Keats' master, Milton, in the *Vacation Exercise*, written at nineteen :

" Hail native Language, that by sinews weak
 Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak."

27. **far-foamed**, covered far with foam, a bold invention of a

passive verb ; cf. 68, *foamed along*, conducted in foam ; *foam* is otherwise an intransitive verb.

31. My words are not intended to fan the flame of your wrath.

33. **perforce**, cf. perchance, peradventure. The old form is *parforce* ; French, *par force*, by force, forcibly ; *par*, Latin, *per*, by.

35. **in its truth**, the truth of his proof.

39. Saturn, being supreme, is blinded to the truth that his supremacy can end ; the feeling of his power fills his mind to the exclusion of any other thought.

46. **chaos** (Greek, from *chaein*, to gape), the state of the world before creation : " And the earth was without form and void." The conception was familiar to the early Greek poet-philosophers, and Keats' account of the beginning, in these lines, blends and sums up many of their guesses at the nature of things.

47. **intestine broil**, a struggling of force among the confused elements of the world. Cf. " intestine war," civil war. *Intestine*, Lat. *intestinus* from *intus*, within : *broil*, like *brawl*, from French *brouiller*, to confound, to disorder.

50. **engendering Upon its own producer**, bringing new life out of that from which it had sprung.

54. These deities are children of Heaven and Earth, firstly, since those are the two everlasting elemental forms outlasting all others, secondly, because all myths are a human, or earthly, imagining of the heavenly.

57. A Miltonic line : (to them) to whom 'tis pain.

59. **envisage** ; French, *envisager*, to bring before one's face or *visage* (Old French, *vis*, still found in *vis-à-vis*, from Latin, *visus*, sight).

circumstance, all that happens.

62. Though these, Chaos and Darkness, were once supreme.

63. **show**, appear.

64. **compact** (Lat. *compactus* from *compingere*, to put together), more organized, further developed from Chaos than the heaven and earth are.

68. The words **more strong in beauty** and those further down,

" 'tis the eternal law

That first in beauty should be first in might,"

express the leading idea of this poem and of all Keats' poetry, that the idea of beauty is pre-eminent over all others, and leads the human mind to ever higher development. See General Introduction I ; Introduction to Keats ; Introduction to notes on these " Voices of the Gods."

88. *dispossessor*, one who has dispossessed another, or deprived him of his possession. *To dispossess* is the antithesis of the verb *to possess* in its sense of putting one in possession: its modern sense being expressed by the passive (still surviving) *to be possessed of a thing*. The allusion is to Neptune, brother of Jupiter, and newer god of the sea, and the winged sea-horses he had created to draw his chariot.

103. *Enceladus*. Much the same as Typho (see Arnold, vi., 3rd song). It was doubtful which of the two was buried under Etna.

V. *La belle dame sans mercy*, the fair and cruel lady.

Like that of the demon-lover (see note on Coleridge, i. 16), the story of a strange, beautiful lady leading knights to destruction and damnation is a frequent theme of romance. Perhaps the central one of all these legends is that of Venus, surviving into the Christian period but become diabolic, and tempting knights into her caverns of pleasure under the Hørselberg. Keats' poem, which many poets have considered the finest lyric in the language, gives the quintessential emotion and drama of the old legend. The title of the poem he had found at the head of an old translation, attributed to Chaucer and included in his works, of a French poem by Alain Chartier, secretary to Charles VI. and VII. The title seems to have fascinated Keats, and brooding on it he created, once more, an essential mythical figure, more tragically beautiful than the ordinary "relentless fair" of Alain's verse. In the *Ève of S. Agnes* we find the title haunting Keats: st. xxxiii.

in chords that tenderest be
He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence called, "*La belle dame sans mercy*."

13. The knight's tale begins.

18. *zone*, Greek, *zoné*, belt. *Fragrant* because the girdle and bracelets, like the garland, are of flowers.

26. *manna*; *Exodus*, xvi. 14 *sqq.*

29. *elfin*, adjective from *elf*: see note on iii. 74.

VI. *The Ode to Maia*,

Never finished, was appropriately begun on May-day (1818); for Maia, mother of Hermes or Mercury, the messenger of the gods—as Keats here invokes her—is the old Earth-goddess Cybele, when she wakes to new life in spring, and May is still named after her.

1. *still*, ever. The word is frequently used in this sense by Elizabethan writers. Compare Shakespeare, *Othello*, i. 3. 147, "But still the house affairs would draw her hence."

3. **Balae**, a town on the Italian sea-coast, between Ostia and Naples; a fashionable watering-place of the Romans during the first century B.C. and the first century A.D. It was never specially connected with the worship of Maia; Keats uses it for Italy generally.

5. In earlier Sicilian; *language* or *style* to be understood. Sicily was the home of Greek pastoral poetry.

VII. Sonnets. (1) **On first looking into Chapman's Homer.** From the *Poems* of 1819.

This sonnet was really written by Keats after having been introduced by Cowden Clarke to the Elizabethan translation of Homer by Chapman (see note on i. 11). Together with the next sonnet it gives us the emotion with which Keats viewed for the first time the world of Greek art.

3. **western islands**, islands of blessedness: see note on Blake, ix.

4. **bards**. Note on Blake, i. 14.

fealty. In the ancient feudal system a noble held land from his suzerain on condition that he declared himself his man (*homme*, whence *homage*) and *féal* (Lat. *fidelis*, faithful), whence *fealty*. Apollo (see note on *Phoebus*, Blake, ii. 6) is suzerain of the "realms of gold" or poetry, and each poet, ruler of each special province, is his *féal*.

6. **Homer**, the legendary author of the two most ancient Greek poems, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

demesne (here pronounced *demean*), another term of feudal law, lands held in one's own power. It is also written and pronounced *demain*, being derived from Old French *demaine*, a variant of *domaine* (Eng. *domain*) from Latin, *dominium*, mastery, lordship; *dominus*, a master.

7. **pure serene**: *serene* is a substantive, a serene expanse, here of air. Cf. Byron, *Childe Harold*, ii. 70:

"Kissing, not ruffling, the deep blue's serene."

10. **ken**, reach of sight or knowledge: archaic and Scottish verb *ken*, to know or see, from A.S. *cennan*, *cunnan* (cf. *cunning*), Icelandic, *kenna*, to know.

11. **Cortez**, Spanish conqueror of Mexico (1519-21), was not the discoverer of the Pacific: as Tennyson pointed out to Mr. Palgrave, the discovery was made by Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, Sept. 26th, 1513.

14. **Darien**, the isthmus in Central America.

(2) On the Elgin Marbles.

The 7th Earl of Elgin, while ambassador at Constantinople in 1801, acquired a large portion of the bas-reliefs and sculptures decorat-

ing the temple of Athena (the Parthenon or "Virgin's Shrine") at Athens. These marbles, representing the highest development of Greek sculpture, were thus saved from destruction by weather or worse agents: Greece was still in the hands of the Turks, and the Parthenon had more than once been damaged by cannon. In 1816 the sculptures passed into the British Museum, where Keats saw them.

The sonnet expresses the feeling of kinship with noble beauty, the sense of a divine element within us excited by the view of such wonders, but immediately shadowed by the thought of life's imperfection, and of mortality, just as the beauty of the marbles is frayed and wasted by time.

The sonnet was addressed to Keats' friend the painter Haydon (1786-1846), who "had been most energetic in preaching the gospel of the Elgin marbles," and for whom "his friends claimed the distinction of being the first to apply to modern art the 'principles' of those immortal works" (MR. H. BUXTON FORMAN).

2. *unwilling* is probably equivalent to *sluggish*: in sleep the motive powers are relaxed. But can we regard the epithet as "transferred," the meaning being, "sleep which I would fain shake off"?

6-8. *luxury* is a word too often found in Keats' early style, in imitation of Leigh Hunt. Here for once it sounds apt: cf. the well-known "luxury of grief." The sense is: Though I am but mortal, yet it is a delight to have even baffled yearnings after divinity, to mourn that I have not a god's task to perform (keeping the winds), and a god's might to perform them withal.

10. *indescribable feud*, a vague unrest and discontent.

13, 14 are hardly equal to the rest of the sonnet. The meaning seems to be that "Grecian grandeur" is confusedly visible through what time has wasted, as the sun or some unimagined magnificence is glimpsed in a tossing water that breaks its reflection.

EDGAR POE.

I. To one in Paradise.

This poem is to be found also, with the substitution of *Italian* for *eternal* in the last line, and a romantic stanza appended, in Poe's tale, *The Assignment*.

17. Such language, the repeated dirge "No more."

II. Ulalume.

Of all Poe's strange explorations in the sloping borderland where poetry *seems* to be about to merge in music, this most nearly brought him to the verge where sense breaks down into something else. Yet along this perilous edge Poe keeps his way, with only an occasional waver—as in the stanza which is best described by a word to be found in it: *liquescence*. The expression depends at times almost entirely on the sound-value of the words. Thus, "my most immemorial year"—in its place in the poem that produces its right and full effect; isolate it, ask its meaning, inquire what are then the degrees of "immemoriality," if any—and you will obtain little answer. Half the poem, if not more, is mood and tone and atmosphere suggested by a peculiar use of sound. Poe has in this poem a larger number of those names which he coined or chose for their sound-suggestion: the name of the buried beloved seems an echo of the wailings of departed times (Irish *ullalu*, Greek *ελελεῦ*).

The poem, written some short time after the death of Poe's wife, presents us with that phase of the grief-stricken spirit when the storm of sorrow has spent itself, leaving behind exhaustion and the natural forgetfulness of grief. For a time the mind is almost soothed and would dream of peace, but the vague sense of an abiding sorrow cannot wholly be stilled, and finally, at the sight of some funereal symbol, once more springs into dominion over the soul. This interpretation is to be found, well-stated but for needless physiological terminology, in Mr. J. M. Robertson's *New Essays towards a Critical Method*, p. 89.

10. *Titanic*, gigantic, like the earth-born Titans (see notes on Keats, *Voices of the Gods*; Arnold, *Songs of Callicles*, iii.).

12. *Psyche*, my Soul. The Greek word *ψυχή* signifies 'soul.' "The Psyche is the obscure whisper of the tired heart, the

suspended memory, that will not be wholly appeased with the beauty of the night and the stars" (J. M. Robertson, *l.c.*).

14. *scoriae*, from *scoriae*, the slag that forms on a lava-current.

19. *boreal*, northern. Greek *Boreas*, the north wind. Note the intensity given to the passion by the remoteness and strangeness of its image: volcanic rage where all else is ice and silence.

26. Poe many times in this piece varies his rhythm by using a line like the present, in which three unaccented syllables follow one another. Cf. lines 28, 41, 60, 66, 71, 84.

29. *ghouls*. Persian *ghoul*, a demon of the mountains and the woods, supposed to devour human beings, later to violate graves.

30. *senescent*, *growing* old, as below, *liquescent*, *becoming* liquid. These forms are derived from the frequentative forms of Latin verbs.

37. *Astarte*: among the Phoenicians the goddess of love and beauty (*Ishtar*), often worshipped with abominable rites; her shrines and images (*Ashtaroth*) were even to be found on "the high places" in Israel. Milton, *Nativity Ode*, 200:

"And mooned *Ashtaroth*,
Heav'n's Queen and Mother both,
Now sits not girt with Tapers, holy shine."

Paradise Lost, i. 438:

"Came *Astoreth*, whom the *Phoenicians* call'd
Astarte, Queen of Heav'n with crescent horns."

The name is used as equivalent to Venus and applied to the planet of love and hope, seen here however in vision, as no naked eye might see it, crescent and "distinct with its duplicate horn." In a rejected stanza of *Ulalume* Poe makes the visionary nature of the planet more distinct; suggesting that the ghouls of the woodland, being pitiful and desiring to hide from the wanderer the funereal secret of the woods, had drawn up this delusive spectre of a planet:

"this sinfully scintillant planet,
From the Hell of the planetary souls."

The ordinary reference to the moon is absurd (Mallarmé, quoting Mrs. Whitman, in note to his translation, pp. 170-176).

39. *Dian*, *Diana*, goddess of forest solitudes and chill sources, of chastity, hence of the cold moon.

43. *Isaiah*, lxi. 24, "For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." *S. Mark*, ix. 44, 46, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

44. The constellation of the Lion.

46. **Lethæan**: all that the mourner now seeks in the heaven of love is the complete oblivious peace of Lethe. Cf. the sentiment of *For Annie*.

64. **sibyllic**, prophetic (of hope, beauty, love, peace): Sibyl, Greek *σῖβυλλα*, an ancient prophetess. There were ten or twelve such, the most famous being that one at the Greek colony of Cumæ near Naples whose books, sold, according to the legend to one of the Roman kings, were consulted as oracles at Rome.

66. **it flickers up the sky** as no planet but a dream-planet would do.

77. **legended**: *legend* (Lat. *legenda*, simply "that which is to be read," i.e. that which is written) is here an inscription or device. The inscription which accompanies a picture may be called a *legend*.

III. For Annie.

An expression, from the grave itself, of the peace of the grave. Poe has, in the "Colloquy of Monos and Una," speculated on the possibility of consciousness remaining in the body after death and during a long period of its stay in the grave, until dissolution is complete. This sleeper, in this poem, lies in a dream of love and peace.

35. **naphthaline**, from *naphtha*, a more volatile and inflammable form of bitumen or asphalt. A river of naphtha would be like the fabled blazing river Phlegethon in the Greek Tartarus, or other world of punishment. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ii. 580:

"fierce *Phlegeton*

Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage."

40. **lullaby**, soothing, as a nurse's song. M.E. *lully*, *lulla*, (whence *lull*), with addition *by*, as in *rockaby* and other words for children:

"Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child:

By, by, lully, lullay, thou little tiny child."

—*Coventry Mysteries*.

53. **tantalisèd**, tormented like Tantalus, a king in Grecian mythology, whose punishment in the other world was that food and drink placed within his reach ever fled when he tried to seize them.

58. **myrtles and roses**, emblematic of passion; the myrtle having been since antiquity associated with love, the rose with pleasure and feasting.

61-66. As against the flushed and flaunting rose, the small blue flowers that scarcely venture to show themselves have been from time immemorial associated in the popular mind with the more contemplative, quiet, and enduring emotions or spiritual

states. Ophelia, when mad (*Hamlet*, iv. 5. 175), gives flowers thus: "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts... there's rue for you... we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays." *pansies*, French *pensée*, of the derivation of which Littré can give no account. The same collocation of letters signifies *thought*. One may conjecture that, as the blue colour of the sky has seemed to man a sign of his highest dreams (Keats has, with his unerring instinct, indicated this, *Endymion*, iv. 1:

" Muse of my native island ...

... by the hues

Of heaven on the spiritual air begot,"

as a similar thought, in the sonnet on *Lear*, this:

" ye clouds of Albion,

Begetters of our deep eternal theme");

as, again, the blue of heaven reflected in waters is a sign of peace and recollection, consequently an untroubled depth of soul, so the *tender* blue of these flowers would have come to mean the "long, long thought" that broods on what it loves, remembering ever (compare the *Forget-me-Not*). Perhaps what lurks behind the use is the peculiar quality which blue possesses, in its deeper shades at least, of absorbing the gaze and producing thereby a dreamy emotion. One may compare the French expressions, *bleu comme le rêve*, blue as dream, and *conte bleu* for a fairy-tale. German speaks familiarly of 'blue wonder,' and in German legend the Blue Flower of Romance fills with its perfume and melody the enchanted forest. Puritan here (66) helps out the idea of demureness and calm. *rosemary* (63) is still planted on graves; was also a lover's token "for remembrance." *rue* (65), see quotation from *Hamlet* above given: herb of grace or repentance, the token of a contrite heart: owing to confusion between this name (from Latin *ruta*) and the pure English words *rue*, *ruth*, *rueful*.

IV. The Haunted Palace.

Also in Poe's tale, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, as a composition of Roderick Usher: "in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne."

16. Went away bearing odour on its wings.

22. *Porphyroge* (Greek *πορφυρογέννητος*), born in the imperial purple; like the princes of the strange court of Byzantium. (Eastern Roman Empire, A.D. 395-1453), who not merely lived in the purple and amid almost Chinese ceremonial, but had to

make their entry into life imperially, and uttered their first cry in a special birth-chamber, purple-hung. They died, however, where death chanced upon them.

38. The image is that of a garden.

42. *red-litten*. The form *litten* seems coined on the false analogy of archaic forms, like *shotten* (here the shorter form survives); *forgotten* has a shorter double *forgot*, confined to verse. But the sound of *red-litten* seems to render obscurely the sinister gleam of those mad-house windows.

V. Annabel Lee.

"The refrain and measure of this lyric suggest a reversion, in the music-haunted brain of its author, to the songs and melodies that, whether primitive or caught up, are favourites with the coloured race, and that must have been familiar to the poet during his childhood in the South."—E. C. STEDMAN, Introduction to vol. x. of Poe's *Works*, ed. Stedman and Woodberry, p. xxxiv.

VI. The City in the Sea.

3. *West*, the region where all things live a ghostly after-life, in all myths and fables.

18. *Babylon*. The walls of Babylon, round the top of which a chariot might be drawn by four horses abreast, and its vast superstructure of terraces mounting as high as the walls, and bearing gardens, were one of the seven "wonders of the world."

19. *bowers*, the word, now confined to arbours, originally meant any dwelling-place of simple or rustic fashion, then any habitation.

22. *frieze*, a sculpture in half-relief running as a continuous band round the upper portion of a building.

26. *shadows*, reflections of the turrets. Owing to the calmness of the waters, turret and shadow seem to unite without a break, forming one whole that hangs in air.

29. Observe the splendid effect of the adverb *gigantically* applied to the act of *looking*. It is Death's look that is *gigantic*; his shape is not even hinted at.

46, 47. *given* = surrendered, left free. The *slight sinking* of the towers not merely stirs the water at their foot, but leaves free a portion of the sky which their tops had hidden.

52, 53. *Isaiah*, xiv. 9, "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

I. In utrumque paratus (Virgil, *Aeneid*, ii. 61): "ready to meet either lot," prepared for the discovery that the world is a divine scheme, or that man and thought are but by-products of the Earth. The poem is a model of austere, intellectual style.

3. procession, the act of proceeding, as in Jeremy Taylor, *Works*, ii. 299: "The Greek churches deny the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son"; though, of course, here the word is applied to a process of creation. Note the opposition in both the first and second stanzas between the coloured variety of the world and the limpid pureness of the divine thought.

5. alternating: the accent falls on the second syllable. This pronunciation of the word is archaic. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, v. 657:

"Who, in their course,
Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
Alternate all night long."

6. long-mused, long-meditated. The verb 'to muse' is probably derived from the Italian *muso*, the mouth or muzzle of an animal. "The image is that of a dog snuffing idly about, and *musings* which direction to take; and may have arisen as a hunting term" (SKEAT).

7. its all-seen way, its course which had been entirely foreseen (by the One all-pure).

8. and 11. O waking: ec. O thou waking, nominative of address.

9. it needs thee count, it is necessary for thee to count.

9-11. Whether thou art born soon after the birth of the world or ages after it.

14. remount: imperative.

20, 21. Similar thought and imagery occur in a saying by William Beckford, the author of *Valhek*: "All important truths, without exception, have been the result of isolated effort; none has ever been discovered by the mass of men, and we may suppose that none ever will be; all come from the experience and reflection of highly endowed spirits: *the great streams spring from lonely sources*." (Not being able to obtain the original, I

translate this passage from a quotation in Mallarmé's preface to *Vathek*, re-edition of the first French issue, 1876, pp. xvi., xvii.)

23. *seats*, used as the Latin *sedes* = the *seats* or abode of the Gods.

25. *obscure*, enshrouded in darkness. Lat. *obscurus*. Cf. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 2. iii. 64:

"the obscure bird
Clamoured the livelong night."

Note that here also, in the quotation from *Macbeth* above, the accent falls upon the first syllable.

27. *happiest throe*: not throe of happiness, but throe (of labour) attended with the best fortune or *hap*. The original meaning of *happy* is "having good hap": e.g. "happy guess," and in line 33, "happy issue."

28. *alone*, i.e. without divine interference.

29-31. Seeming to emerge alone into the sunlight of truth out of the mists of ignorance or of undeveloped consciousness, wherein all else is hidden. The "brother world" is the dumb material and animal world, of which the thinker, in this case, is only a chance product.

36. i.e. O thou who art most alone when most self-exalted.

41. *spasm*, scanned as a word of two syllables.

II. The Future.

The unrhymed measure of this poem (and others) was adopted by Arnold from the German.

25. *wots*, knows. Old English *witan*, to know. The present tense, singular, was *Ic wat, thou wast, he wat*; in the form 'wots,' the 's' is intrusive, i.e. *wat* being really an old past tense used as a present.

36. *Rebekah*, see *Genesis*, xxiv. 45 *sqq.*

45. *Moses*, see *Exodus*, chaps. iii. and iv.

III. The Forsaken Merman.

Mention has been made of the childish spirit which the Middle Ages brought to the classic myths, regarding their creatures as existing *per se* in a world of fancy, and transferring them into the haunted mediæval world. One of their most delightful fancies was that concerning the souls of the fauns, fairies, and water-spirits—particularly of the latter—souls, it was thought, incapable of sorrow, but also of sin, repentance, salvation, and immortality, those most precious and important pre-occupations of the mediæval mind. This fancy was dramatically expressed by bringing such a nature-spirit into contact of love with a

Christian soul and has inspired two fine modern works: the *Undine* of de la Motte Fouqué, where the water-maiden, through marriage with a knight, receives a soul and experiences sorrow; and this poem of Arnold's, wherein that little particular corner and strange by-way of the romantic world is exquisitely limned. The whole atmosphere of the poem is mediaeval: the "little church," as in a pre-Raphaelite picture, determines the spiritual tone of the whole.

42. *mail*, chain-armour; here the scale-armour of the sea-snakes. Lat. *macula*, a spot, a mesh of a net.

68. *down*, hill, dune. A.S. *dūn*, a hill.

75. *aisle*, the wing of a church. Lat. *ala*, a wing.

133. *hie*, hurry. A.S. *higian*, to hurry.

IV. Requiescat.

2. *yew*, cf. Blake, iii. 5.

12. *laps*, wraps. "The M.E. *volappen* is a later form of *urappen*, to wrap, by the frequent change of *r* to *l*; so that *lap* is a mere corruption or later form of *wrap*" (SKEAT). Cf. Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, v. 5. 360:

"He, sir, was lapped
In a most curious mantle."

R. Barnefield, *The Nightingale*:

"King Pandion, he is dead,
All thy friends are lapp'd in lead."

13. *cabin'd*, confined. Cf. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, iii. 4. 24:

"But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears."

16. *vasty*, vast. A form commonly used in the Elizabethan period. So also 'hugy,' 'steepy,' etc. Cf. Shakespeare, *1 Henry IV*. iii. 1. 52:

"I can call spirits from the vasty deep."

V. Isolation.

This poem was first published in *Empedocles on Etna*, and other Poems (1852). It then bore the title

TO MARGUERITE,

ON RETURNING A VOLUME OF THE LETTERS OF ORTIS.

1-6. This idea of the spiritual solitariness of the individual man constantly recurs in Arnold's poetry. In a poem im-

mediately preceding this one, in the series from which it is taken, he says:

"But thou hast long had place to prove
This truth—to prove, and make thine own:
'Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone.'"

So also in *The Buried Life*:

"Alas! is even love too weak
To unlock the heart, and let it speak?
Are even lovers powerless to reveal
To one another what indeed they feel?"

—and in *Poor Matthias*, an elegy on a pet canary:

"What you feel, escapes our ken—
Know we more our fellowmen?
Human suffering at our side,
Ah, like yours is undescried!
Human longings, human fears,
Miss our eyes and miss our ears.
Little helping, wounding much,
Dull of heart, and hard of touch,
Brother man's despairing sign
Who may trust us to divine?
Who assure us, sundering powers
Stand not 'twixt his soul and ours?"

18. *marges*, margins. Lat. *margo*, through Fr. *marge*.
Cf. Drayton, *Polyolbion*, xxii.:

"By this the Muse arrives
At Elie's isled *marge*."

24. *unplumb'd*, unsounded. Fr. *plomber*, to sound with a lead-line; Lat. *plumbum*, lead.

VI. Songs of Callicles. First Song of Callicles.

These songs are from Arnold's dramatic poem *Empedocles on Etna*. This Empedocles was a philosopher and poet born at Agrigentum in Sicily during the 5th century B.C. He adopted the Pythagorean doctrine that the soul, after death, migrates into another bodily form: he promulgated an original theory that the material world is composed out of the four elements of earth, water, air and fire, by the action of a principle of attraction, which he called Love; an opposite principle, Strife or Hate, bringing about their dissolution into the elements, or death. He perished in the fires of Etna, owing, it is thought, to his curiosity about volcanic phenomena, which led him too near the crater. But as he was given to performing what in those days was looked upon by the mass of men as miracles, a tale grew up among his enemies that he had voluntarily sought a death which,

by leaving no trace of his remains behind, would make the vulgar think that he had passed from earth in some mysterious fashion, being a god; and that the volcano, by throwing up one of his sandals, had discovered the cheat. Arnold's poem deals with his suicide, the motive for it however is other. Here Empedocles feels that he has outlived himself; the last of the old poet-philosophers, he has seen the world invaded by wrangling sophists and logic-choppers who "overlay the last spark of man's consciousness with words"; he feels that "fulness of life and power of feeling" have past from him, that he has been the slave of thought, and has

"lived in wrath and gloom,
Fierce, disputatious, ever at war with man,
Far from his own soul."

Therefore he returns to the elements.

It is told of Empedocles that he loved to assuage mental pain with music, like Saul. Arnold uses this tradition to introduce the harper Callicles, whose songs, heard from below the peak of Etna by Empedocles, stand out in relief, by reason of the natural beauty and divine peace they describe, against the gloomy musings of the thought-weary sage. The first passes from a description of the landscape on Etna's side to thoughts of the landscape of legend.

23. *Pellion* was one of the sacred mountains of Thessaly (see note on 'Ida,' Blake, i. 1). When the giant sons of Earth, who lived before the gods, made war on the latter, they sought, by piling this mountain on its neighbour *Ossa*, to climb into Olympus.

24. The *Centaurs* were fabulous creatures bearing the head and trunk of a man on the body of a horse. Fierceness was one of their attributes, and they were exterminated by the hero Hercules. But again, like such personifications of the occult life of Nature in all mythologies, they possess earth-lore and wisdom (indeed their fierceness is but that of Nature itself). So here *Chiron*, who became the friend of Hercules, and was spared by him.

25. *Achilles* was the son of *Peleus*, king of *Phthia* in Thessaly, and the greatest of Greek legendary (human) heroes, the greatest warrior that fought before Troy when all Greece set out to recover Helen, queen of Sparta, carried off from her husband by the Trojan prince *Paris*.

30. The wood of the ash, being very tough, was at all times used for the hafts of spears.

37. *mortal wars*, the wars of mortals.

38, 39. The Heroes, like Hercules, mentioned above, were of birth half-human, half-divine, and thus pre-eminent among men

for valour. When they died they passed, not to Hades, where ordinary men, even the great Achilles himself, led a wretched after-life as strengthless shades, but to the *Elysian* fields or dwelling of the blest, set in the west (cf. note on Blake's *Ah Sunflower*).

40. *mead*, meadow; a form now more common in verse than in prose. Old Eng. *mæd*.

41. *all the wisdom*, etc.; objective, governed by *told*.

his, Chiron's.

Second Song of Callicles.

Around Thebes, in Boeotia, centered a legendary history second only to that dealing with Troy. If not the whole city, at least its ancient citadel, known in historic times as the Cadmeia, was fabled to have been built by Cadmus, who brought letters into Greece. In the story of his marriage with Harmonia (Harmony), daughter of Venus or Beauty, a marriage attended by all the gods and the muses, we may see an allegory of the birth of poetry. When harmony and rhythm, which are the signs of harmonies and rhythms existing in the nature of things, are wedded to articulate speech (Cadmus, inventor of the alphabet), then the muses, or divine singers, and the gods, who personify the universal harmonies (see Introduction, xix.), are brought down upon earth. A similar myth concerning Thebes relates that it arose spontaneously, to the sound of Amphion's lyre, like that ideal city which is

"built
To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built for ever"

(TENNYSON, *Gareth and Lynette*);

the true habitation of humanity, framed according to those relations which the poetic genius perceives in the world (see Introduction I.).

Every myth is the allegory or symbol of an idea, a universal harmony, as said above; but there comes a time when the folk forgets its meaning and treats the personages of myth as existing in themselves, inhabitants of tale-land, without reference to spiritual fact. The myth is then overlaid with additions, growing often out of local rites in connection with some mythical hero. In this myth Cadmus was later regarded merely as King of Thebes, and it was told that a curse from heaven drove his offspring to madness, violence, and death. Arnold deals with this phase of the legend, the final state of Cadmus and his wife. The beauty and dramatic aptness of his treatment justify him, being enough. Observe the felicity with which he uses, throughout the whole song, none but the simplest adjectives; a

lesson for a time when writers feverishly hunt for rare (that is to say, mostly far-fetched) epithets. Arnold's are rare in that they are right.

3. **Illyrian hills**: Illyria, a country bordering on the Adriatic Sea, opposite Italy.

8. **virginal**, fresh; lit. maiden-like.

14. The **Sphinx** (the strangler, from the Greek *sphingo*, to strangle) must not be confounded with the Egyptian Sphinx. This monster, half woman, half snake—a variant of the serpent-woman, Lamia, Lilith, or Melusine, who in myth embodies mystery—lurked in a cave outside Thebes and propounded to passers-by a riddle, which whosoever could not answer was devoured by her. When the riddle was finally solved, she destroyed herself.

15. **unhappy**, subject to misfortune or evil *hap*. Cf. note on 'happiest throe,' *In Utrumque Paratus*, l. 27.

16. **Ismenus**, a river by Thebes.

19. **billow of calamity**, a favourite image in Greek drama.

22. **they sitting helpless**: nominative absolute.

27. **rapt**, carried off. Lat. *rapere*.

Third Song of Callicles.

5. **Typho** was one of the Titans or giant sons of Earth who fought against the new generation of gods (see Keats, *Hyperion*). After their defeat this one was punished by being fastened under the roots of Etna, and it was told that when he turned on his couch the island shook and the mountain jetted fire (ll. 9-12). See note on 'Enceladus,' Keats.

12. **such red jets**: objective governed by *flash*.

17. **Cilician hills**, Cilicia, a country of Asia Minor, one of the fabled places from which the giants attacked heaven.

18. **Mount of Gore**. Arnold's own note is as follows: "Mount Haemus, so called, said the legend, from Typho's blood spilt on it in his last battle with Zeus, when the giant's strength failed, owing to the Destinies having, a short time before, given treacherously to him, for his refreshment, perishable fruits. See Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, bk. i., ch. 6."

19. **weep**, bewail, lament, weep for. Cf. Tennyson, *The Princess*, iv.:

"Nor is it
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones be."

23. **erst**, soonest, first. From O.E. *aerest*, the superlative of O.E. *æder*, soon.

31. **pleasure bland** : objective governed by sees in l. 34.

32. **Thunderer**, Jupiter, chief of gods, whose especial weapon was the thunder-bolt. Thunder-storms were often looked upon by primitive peoples as direct manifestations of divine power or wrath.

35. **the Olympian council**, the divinities assembled on Olympus.

37. Note the inversion. Subject, 'hand'; object, 'lightnings.'

38. The **eagle**, as the noblest bird, was the attendant and messenger of Jupiter. The **blue films** are the nictitating membranes or inner eyelids, which veil the eagle's eyes from the sun. The lion also possesses them : man has the rudiments thereof in the inner corner of each eye.

beck, gesture of command.

42. **sovrän**, commanding; the same word as 'sovereign.' Milton was the first English author to use this form. The 'g' in 'sovereign' is intrusive, and probably arises from some confusion with the word 'reign.' Italian *sovrano*, French *souverain*, Middle Latin *superanus*, from *super*, above. The cognate and much-discussed word *suzerain* comes from French *sus*, Latin *sumum*, an alternative form of *sursum*.

48. In all mythologies the gods possess a food, or drink, which renews their youth, beauty, and vigour. In Greek myth the dispenser of this drink is aptly termed *Hebe*, which, being interpreted, is *youth*.

49. **beguile**, foil, render unfelt.

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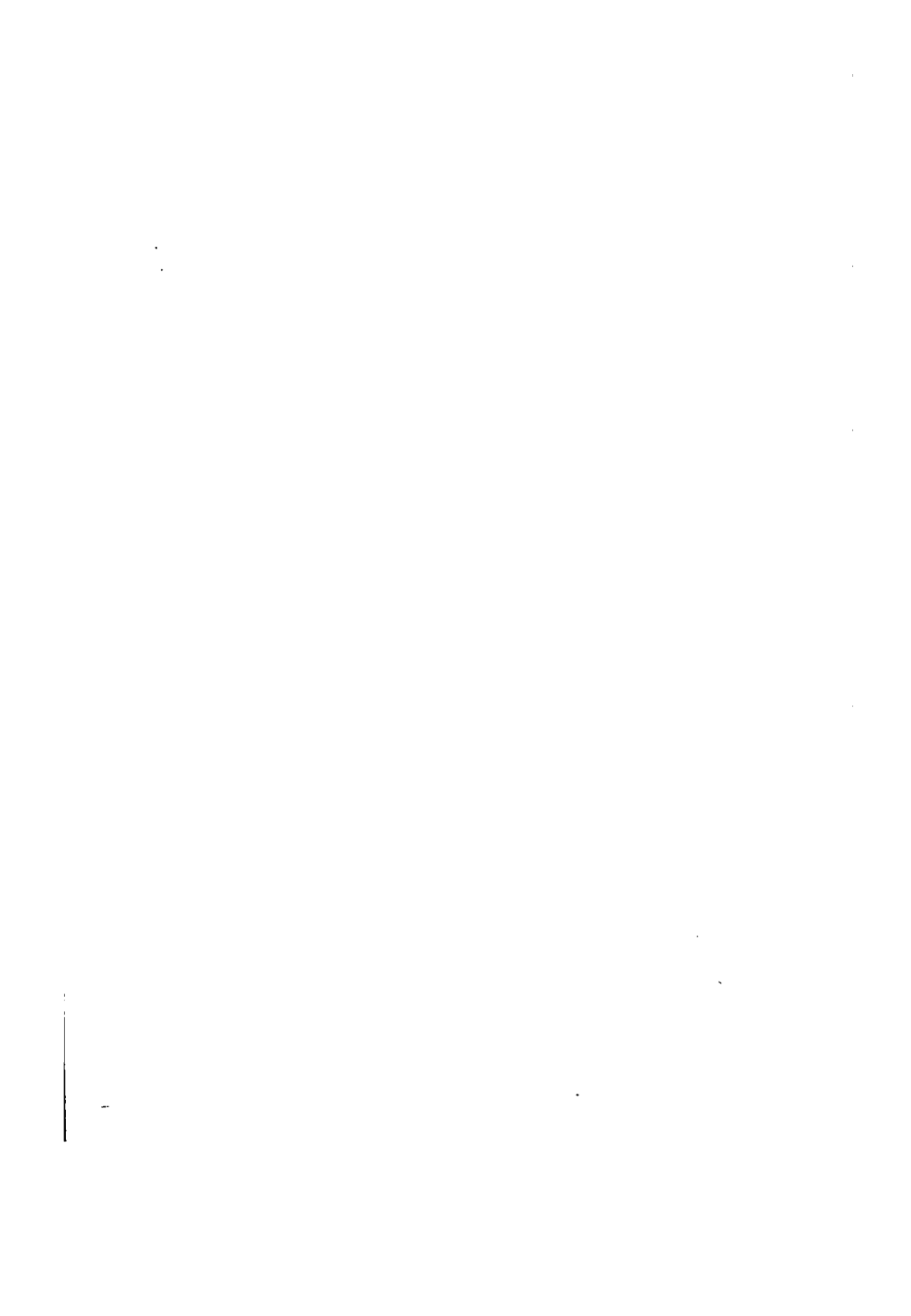
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